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ABSTRACT

Summaries of 73 conference presentations dealing with youth at risk are divided into 6 sections, as was the conference. Section 1 "Understanding Students at Risk," identifies a variety of human services and insights along with suggested procedures for prediction and identification of youth at risk. Section 2, "Preventing and Reducing Incidents of Students at Risk," describes some of the challenges to schools, the business community, and city and community agencies. Section 3, "Parent and Community Involvement," discusses ways each of us can become involved in workable and usable techniques. Section 4, "Reforming and Changing Delivery Systems," addresses some of the strategies and techniques that teachers can use for dropout prevention. Section 5, "Strategies and Programs for Involving At-Risk Youth," places particular emphasis on building self-esteem and motivation, and suggests teaching strategies that can play a key role in the success rate of the at-risk student. Section 6, "Changing the System," offers suggestions of possible interventions. The appendices contain a complete listing of all presentations made at the conference and the names and addresses of the authors. (MLF)

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A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH AT RISK

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VOLUME II
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A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH AT RISK

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We sincerely dedicate this volume to the Youth of Tomorrow

4

YOUTH AT RISK

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Foreword

Following a recent National Conference held in Savannah, Georgia, dealing with youth at risk, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) contacted the coordinators of the conference requesting more information concerning follow-up publications and possible future activities. The result of that initial meeting was an agreement to publish a summary of the conference presentations. The agreement was to go beyond short abstracts, to provide more lengthy articles where authors could give more insight and understandings to policies, strategies, practices, successes and failures in dealing with various at-risk issues.

This text is the result of that effort. It is divided into six units or sections, as was the conference. These sections do at times overlap each other, but a concerted effort was made to separate certain "zones" of information for readers. Note that Appendix A is a complete listing of all presentations made at the 1992 conference. We thought this overview of the actual conference might challenge others to consider putting together such an affair.

It is important that readers of this volume understand that there are *no* magic bullets, *no* quick fixes, *no* panaceas contained within this work. The problems we face with the complexities of "at-riskness" will be with us in some form for a long time. But, what we do offer readers of this volume are important research findings, instructional improvements, and individual success stories. It is ironic that some of the best-documented and well-researched knowledge about "what works" or "what is working" in the education of at-risk youth comes not from educational literature but from shared experiences and networking activities. The material contained in this volume is meant to be a link for many of those identifiable programs and activities, that are yet relatively unshared in the literature.

As you read about a classroom activity, or an entire alternative school's approach to a problem that concerns you, or as you read about common characteristics of programs similar to ones you are currently dealing with, consider contacting the authors. A comprehensive listing of authors is provided in this text and is recommended to you. These individuals are well suited to advise, counsel, and/or correspond. The common bond here is that they are attempting to resolve at-risk problems and are making themselves accessible. Take advantage of the offer!

A recent issue of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's (ASCD) *Curricular Update* (June, 1991), best summarizes our overall attempt in this volume. It is "the largest challenge" of all when dealing with at-riskness: "mobilizing educators to take action." Quite a lot of pockets of information exist about what and when things work with youth at risk, but "the question is not so much what do we do? but [more] how do we get people to do it?" The editors of this volume along with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools feel that this volume can serve and support that purpose.

The challenge we face as administrators, educators, parents and as a community is not initially to solve all of the problems of at-riskness, but to take steps forward. This is a feasible answer! If we hold back or lack the initiative or courage to take these steps we may pay dearly in the future. Our challenge and efforts therefore should be in direction and action, toward making individual successes more widespread and understandable.

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Finally, thanks to our typing crew made up of Donna Colson, Beth Parrish and Tina Southwell from Georgia Southern University. These "computer experts" (we like to think of them as wizards), have brought our words to the light of day. Their excellent effort is acknowledged.

Introduction

However one analyzes the frustration, behaviors and attitudes of troubled youth and their oftentimes seemingly "aimless existence," one fact is becoming increasingly clear. That is that in a society undergoing a revolution in its folkways, norms, and values, that its youth (quite possibly all of them to some degree) are at risk. Extrapolating selected perceptions from the entire spectrum of human behavior, one notices the fragility as well as the breakdown of traditional family life. Also given the rise in numbers of structurally dysfunctional families, a rising divorce rate, the prominence of single-parent households, and childhoods victimized by violence, sexual abuse and incest, one can readily witness major impacts on a child's social and emotional development. These kinds of events all affect our youth's behaviors. They can twist, shape or disorient psychological and social functioning and the multiple relationships each of us has from childhood through young adulthood. They are often the essence of at-riskness.

While most young people successfully negotiate the transition from one life stage to the next by developing positive values and building strong relationship, for some it is an experience of pain, anger and uncertainty. And for what seems an ever-growing number of youth experiencing feelings of low self-esteem, isolation and depression, life-taking and/or self-harming behaviors are often tragic consequences. As no surprise, a significant number of young people are mired in developmental difficulties as early as the primary grades where they are experiencing academic and behavioral problems. The school's task through it all remains that of educating the whole child, nurturing the personal and social aspects of a child's life and experiences. Since most children spend much of their waking hours in school during their maturing years, the school itself represents one constant reality in an otherwise changing, confusing, and uncertain world. A school experience promises no panacea. It does, however, uniquely integrate resources of both educational and mental health. When offered in a systematic, long-term preventive approach, these resources can help to ensure assistance for all students toward building higher self-esteem, enabling students to cope with problems, develop healthy values, and nuture strong relationships from childhood into adult life. This, of course, is not always the case, but necessarily remains a major educational goal.

The effort this volume attempts to deal with is one of closing a "guidance gap" with current schools and community programs. The articles contained in this volume are directed at three basic areas: (1) Primary intervention activities which are deemed essential for position promotion of one's basic mental health — that is, helping a student transfer learning to the real world through age-related activities and exercises; (2) Intermediate intervention where behavior having potential for undermining a student's progress is automatically a target for preventive/remedial intervention; and (3) Tertiary intervention, which involves the full range of school resources as well as the specialized resources of a community. These three conceptual areas of effort make up the content of this volume and are interwoven throughout the six sections that follow. Since many of the at-risk students who are currently in or will be coming to our secondary schools are well behind in basic academic skills development, it is highly likely that any and all of the three above-mentioned conceptual areas could be of importance in resolving student problems. The point is not to limit one's review of the contents of this volume to a title or heading that appears too narrow in scope or perspective, but to review and investigate any experience documented in this volume that might appear to affect a reader's concerns.

Precise topics within this text vary considerably, and interestingly only a few common definitions have emerged through the literature. The popular definition of students who are at risk is, by default, those students who are affected most by the risk factors. Those risk factors are low achievement, retention in grade, behavior problems, poor attendance, low socioeconomic status, and attendance at schools with large numbers of poor students. All of these factors are closely related to dropping out of school which, as it turns out, is what the at-risk label is identifying.

Important research has found that by the time students are in the third grade, one can fairly reliably predict which students will ultimately drop out and those who will complete their schooling (Howard and Anders, 1978); Lloyd, 1978; Barber and McClellan, 1987; Hamby, 1989; Slavin, Karweit, and Madden, 1989). These risk factors are usually stress-related and ultimately affect the identification and predictability of dropouts with actual performance as the most reliable predictor.

With the above ideas concerning at risk in mind, this volume looks closely at the "classic dropout." That individual will likely be a member of a racial, ethnic, or language minority group and from a family where education is not a high priority; the individual will have academic difficulties, including the possibility of being behind in grade level; the individual will be bored or frustrated with school. The process of dropping out will often include a growing number of tardies and absences, disruptive classroom behavior, and a decline in academic performance. The classic dropout simply stops coming to school one day.

One common factor brought to light is that schools and school systems that are effective in reducing the numbers of dropouts do not permit this classic scenario to reach fruition. Through early identification, the high-risk student is not permitted to become just another statistic. Absences or behavior problems are not merely observed; action is taken to understand the causes and to prevent unnecessary repetitions. Where needed, the student is directed to the individual within the school (a counselor, a teacher, or an administrator) who is best prepared to understand the problems of the student and to work with that student in addressing those problems. Students should not be allowed to "disappear," but when the decision to leave school is not reversible, the school should point the dropout to alternative programs and options for keeping the door to an education open. The student, in general, needs to be made to feel that some individual cares, and also, that the school cares.

That individual within the school, (an administrator, counselor, or dropout coordinator), needs to assume responsibility as an advocate for the potential dropout, to insure that a resource response is mobilized in time and in sufficient manner to make a difference to the student. The burden should not, however, rest on one individual, no matter how well meaning and skilled that individual might be. A support network of individuals, programs, and organizations must be in place to provide meaningful remedies and alternatives.

At-risk students need multiple resources. It is, therefore, important that schools and school boards network with multiple resource,s such as a school/community policymaking council, involving industry leaders with a vested interest in children's school success. Groups to be considered include church, business, school, service clubs, universities, colleges, vocational and technical schools, youth service groups, chambers of commerce, health and social service groups, and local news media.

With a resource network in place, short- and long-range policies and plans can be developed for both in the school and in the community. Policies and plans may include:

- serving at-risk children through the resource network
- monitoring and evaluating both school and community programs serving at-risk children
- reviewing and monitoring the practical function of the resource network.

A number of possible program formats offer simple, effective techniques for organizing and managing diverse school/community resources to develop and conduct programs for at-risk children.

Numerous studies show that school programs alone are not well equipped to address those nonschool causes which place children at risk of school and life failure. It is therefore, imperative that school boards network with multiple resources (school, community, family, business, and industry) that can serve the needs of at-risk children both in school and outside of school.

The greatest value of the above kind of logic is the kind of effective use that can be made of it. Likewise it is hoped that the data, findings and experiences contained in this volume can help improve activities and programs for at-risk students. Quite possibly the kinds of recommendations and reported information that follow can be used as benchmarks for program improvement, self-evaluation, and raising the levels of awareness in all segments of our communities.

— RCM

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Section One

Understanding Students At Risk

What does it mean for a young person to be at risk? During the late 1980's educators began to use the term at risk to describe certain categories of students. The Phi Delta Kappan "Study of Students At Risk" began with the assumption that "children are at risk if they are likely to fail—either in school or in life" (Frymier and Gansneder, 1989). Lehr and Harris (1988) define the at risk student as "one who is not working up to potential," but were quick to add that a review of the literature did not indicate a formally accepted definition of the at risk student. Thus, the meaning of the term has not been very precise by definition and varies considerably in practice. Instead, the term "at risk" encompasses many groups of students who have special characteristics or needs. According to Slavin, Karweit, and Madden (1989), one possible definition is that students who are at risk are those who, on the basis of special characteristics or needs, are unlikely to graduate or leave school with an adequate level of basic skills due to school failure.

The at-risk label serves as the identification of categories of persons who are at risk. As a result, by acknowledging these students something can be done to prevent and maybe eliminate the effects of those factors which limit the learning and potential of those students. It is this identification and prevention sequence which Richardson, and others (1989) say the term at risk seems to carry when used in areas of education. Studying youth at risk helps us to better identify and prevent behavior leading to failure in school and in life before dropping out of school.

According to Orr (1987), school-related problems encompass many personal and social pressures that have long been known to be impediments to educational achievement. Findings from the "High School and Beyond Survey" of adolescents commonly identify family-related problems, such as divorce, getting married, being pregnant, needing to work, and personal problems, such as being sick or responding to peer pressure as reasons for dropping out (Peng, 1983). Alienation by the schools is another factor cited by Orr as discouraging students from staying in school. The lack of encouragement by schools may compound a student's academic, social, or personal maladjustment problems, further reducing any desire or ability to remain in school, thus resulting in dropping out.

Section One identifies a variety of human services and insights that have been found to be effective toward understanding and serving the needs of youth at risk. This section also contains suggested procedures for prediction and identification of youth at risk. Finally, Section One is offered as a helpful tool for readers to begin to become aware of the variety of ideas, activities, and programmatic models available. Needless to say, it is extremely important for users of this guide to select only those models and activities best suited to the youth at risk in their own communities.

Let Them Speak . . . Let Us Listen . . . Let Us Change

Mary L. Carroll and Nancy Veerman

J. J. is eighteen. His problems with school began early and have caused continuous conflict. His parents say he needs to be more self-disciplined and to get better grades. His teachers say he needs to pay closer attention and to be less disruptive. It seems to him that the only attention he gets at home or at school is when he makes a mistake, forgets to do something, or does it completely wrong. He is overwhelmed by expectations he cannot fulfill for himself or others even when he tries his best. He is falling further and further behind, and he sees no reason to keep trying. He sees school as cruel, boring, irrelevant, and most of all, uncaring. His parents, friends, and teachers do not have the time, patience, or energy to help him. He may as well quit school.

Thirty-eight per cent of high school students do exactly that (Lively). They leave the traditional school system. Nearly 1400 of these students who drop out of school choose to enroll in the Adult High School program at Seminole Community College. As part of the adult education program, the AHS contrasts in many ways with the traditional high school. As the name implies, the students are adults and expect to be treated as adults. The responsibility for learning, attendance, and behavior is placed on the student and not on his parents. Students are at least sixteen years old, most hold full-or part-time jobs, and some are completely self-supporting. Since they feel rejected by the traditional system, most of them feel hostility toward school in general and teachers in particular. The AHS tries to create a place where teachers care in special ways for these high-risk students whose self-worth is so low.

> *Probably the single most critical factor in reducing dropout is an effective and caring teacher. No innovative program can replace the work of talented and dedicated teachers who make it their business to see that each of their students succeeds. Students on a collision course with dropping out need special attention and services. (Grossnickle 22)*

The underlying philosophy of the AHS is to provide a strong academic environment while continually addressing emotional needs of students. It is the contention of the AHS staff that the major reason why students drop out of high school is that they suffer from feelings of inferiority and a continuing fear of failure. As personally reflected by one student, "I dropped out of school because I was getting all F's. Now I'm getting A's and B's and I know I can make something of myself."

The curriculum at the AHS differs from that of the traditional high school be being both accelerated and basic. Courses are designed to meet not only state guidelines for graduation but also the practical needs of the high-risk learner. "Dropouts frequently complain that their teachers did too much lecturing and did little to show the application of lessons to a student's present or future life" (Grossnickle 23).

Students who choose to attend an alternative program like the Adult High School are not interested in the availability of extracurricular activities, since many of them have jobs, families, and other responsibilities. Generally, they are not concerned with grade point averages nor are they in competition with each other. They want to complete their credits quickly and get on with their lives since they are already older than their counterparts in the traditional system. Thus it becomes critical for the teacher to identify and relate to the learner's point of view since it is so different from that of the traditional student.

> *Emphasizing applications of course content to various careers teaches how school relates to the world of work. By encouraging regular attendance and enforcing the attendance policy, teachers instill an important lifelong habit. By teaching goal-setting, study skills, and planning techniques, teachers show students how to become organized. (Grossnickle 23)*

Personalized attention focused on the particular needs of each student can go a long way in reversing the pattern of repeated failure. The one thing the majority of the students have in common is that they have failed academically and/or socially in the traditional school. This may be their last attempt to achieve an education. It is crucial for these students to receive encouragement and praise for every accomplishment, no matter how small. Because low self-esteem and feelings of failure so strongly dominate their thinking and decision-making, these high-risk students need to know there is nothing they can do or say which will label them as failures.

In writing about dropouts, Norman Chansky uses the analogy of a seed.

> *As even the best 'seeds' must have suitable soil and adequate moisture to sprout and flourish, so, too, must the school provide a nurturing environment for learning to flourish. Administrators must establish a learning climate that meets the particular needs of every student. Even with unfavorable home circumstances, students can succeed when teachers provide personalized attention . . . ;When weeds hamper the growth of seeds once sprouted, they must be carefully eliminated. So, too, must learning difficulties be eliminated if students are to grow. As the application of fertilizer makes the difference between a poor and an abundant crop, so motivation properly applied makes the difference between mediocre and quality learning. (Grossnickle 24)*

J. J., who is now a student at the Adult High School, is experiencing the nurturing environment described by Chansky. He has begun to experience success and achievement, and likes being there. His own words tell the story:

> *I left the public school because I was tired of being hassled for every little thing I did. It seemed like the teachers and principal were on my case all the time. School was such a waste of time. Even when I tried my best, I didn't seem to be able to pass, and the teachers didn't want to help. I guess they were too busy with the good students to waste their time on me. I was supposed to graduate last year, but I didn't have enough credits because I had failed so many classes. Everything is different now. I'm getting good grades, I'm not in trouble, and I actually want to come to school.*

If we who work with high-risk learners will not only let them speak to us, but will actually hear what they are saying beneath the surface, we will change our attitudes and our approach. As we allow our vision to be changed by the significance of their words, their view of themselves and what they can accomplish will be altered positively.

J. J. plans to graduate in the spring.

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Adolescents Are What They Think You Think They Are: Self-Concept and The At-Risk Student

Darrel Lang

In some primitive cultures, a formal ceremony known as the "rite of passage" marked the point in a child's life when he grows up from a small child to become an adult. Children didn't go through adolescence, so adolescence was neither as difficult nor as prolonged as it is in our modern society and culture.

With the fast-paced society of today, the period of adolescence has become a very demanding period of growth. Adolescents are neither children or adults. They are caught in a period of "limbo." They have certain privileges: driver's license, voting, parenthood, military obligations, and employment. However, even though they have these privileges, most adolescents are not properly prepared because of their low level of self-concept. One's self-concept is instrumental in meeting the needs of survival, according to Maslow.

One's self-concept is divided into five distinct parts. The first part is the past-self. One's past-self involves all the things that were said and done to an individual in the past. Many of us had a teacher, parent or adult who said something negative or positive that impacted our life. Can any of you remember something a teacher said to you that was negative? Maybe the teacher said you were a poor speller, so all your life you kept thinking you were a poor speller and you were! Maybe you were big for your age, and your aunt or uncle kept making comments about how large your feet were. From that point on, you had this vision in your mind that you were about the size of a house, so you didn't feel good about yourself. Every time I hear someone mention this, I consistently remember the statement that Eleanor Roosevelt said, "Nobody can make you feel bad unless you give them permission!"

One's past is also based upon how our parents, culture and socio-economic status impacted upon us. Parents are divided into various classifications. Some parents are classified as perfectionist parents. They want everything to be perfect. They live by the adage:

"Good, better, best
Never let them rest,
'Til their good is better
And their better is best!"

The child who doesn't live up to the expectations of the perfectionist parent doesn't feel like he is worth anything. If this feeling begins early in life, it will continue and manifest itself when the child becomes an adolescent.

The pusher parent is the type of parent who tries to get the child involved in every activity known. The child often cannot be successful in any of the activities, thus leaving him with a feeling that he has let his parents down. Again, making him feel like he's a failure and thus breaking down his self-concept.

Another parent who has an effect upon a child's self-concept is the authoritarian parent. This type of parent states to a child that there is one way and only one way to do anything. Orders are often given and expected to be followed. The child often feels that what he thinks or feels is so inferior, and he never challenges the parent. This negative feeling often stifles creativity and makes the child feel inadequate.

Every child at one time or another would like to have freedom from his parents. Freedom from parents means basically allowing them to do whatever they wish. This idea, as appealing as it might seem, needs reflection. Actually after a period of time, most children soon realize that a freedom isn't the 'parents' to give. Hindsight tells us that negative feelings are more important to deal with than just mere freedom of choice.

The present-self is often seen as one's self-image. This is how one sees his bodily self and how he interpret others as seeing him. In a time of tremendous growth and development, adolescents often see their self-image in a negative frame. Acne, large feet, wider hips and growth of the sexual organs often cause adolescents to question their sexuality. The common question that abounds is, "Am I normal?"

The future-self is that part of one's self which looks to the future and examines goals. A child with a good self-concept will set short-term and long-term goals and know how to go about achieving those goals.

The fourth component of self-concept is self-esteem. Self-esteem is an attitude, how one feels about oneself. A strong sense of self-esteem is one of the most valuable resources an adolescent can have. Studies have shown that the teenager with a high sense of self-esteem will learn more effectively, develop more rewarding relationships, be more able to use opportunities to work productively and be self-sufficient. He will also have a clearer sense of his own direction than the adolescent who has a low opinion of himself. If an adolescent leaves this stage of life with a strongly developed sense of self-esteem, he may enter adulthood armed with a large part of the sound foundation he will need to lead a productive and fulfilling life.

The fifth and final part of self-concept is the multiple selves. The analogy is that of a series of tiny tape recorders in one's brain. It's remembering all the statements and actions that were done against you throughout life. It's being called on to spell a word and instantly remembering your third grade teacher telling you that you were an awful speller, therefore, not being able to spell the word. It's remembering the girl in seventh grade who told you that you had a big nose, and therefore thinking you are not attractive. These tape recordings are constantly triggered only if we allow them to be triggered.

In these times of rapid changes in the world and the family structure, one of the most important resources you can support in an adolescent is a sense of self-worth or high self-concept. It is a strength that each and every adolescent may always carry within himself, and once it is strongly established and they understood, it can be relied on for life.

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Preventing the High-Risk Course: Meeting the Needs of the Nursing Student At Risk A Student-Centered Approach

Deborah Kramer

In the past two decades, increased student diversity, multiplicity of student purposes and goals, and universal access to education have posed new challenges for educators in higher education. The majority of the registered nurse (RN) baccalaureate applicants fit into the category of nontraditional, disadvantaged or underprepared learners. It has been estimated that, at current attrition rates, 12 to 48 million dollars will be spent in the 1990's to recruit nursing students who will never graduate.

The needs of these high risk students can no longer be ignored. Nursing faculty are confronted with the need to develop strategies to meet the needs of this new student body. The traditional strategy offered to high-risk nursing students was to require them to pass a selected number of basic skills remediation courses prior to entering the nursing curriculum. Reports indicate that this has not been a successful strategy because these skills are not reinforced through the curriculum.

The **purpose** of this study was to implement an Integrated Skills Reinforcement (ISR) program for high-risk students in a senior level baccalaureate nursing course. The ISR consisted of using multiple student-centered teaching strategies to reinforce basic skills within the syllabus of a traditional nursing course. The expected outcome for student participants was to obtain higher scores on basic skills tests and receive a passing grade in the designated course.

The **convenience sample** consisted of 30 minority adult high-risk students enrolled in an upper division baccalaureate senior nursing course. On the first day, the students were assessed in reading, writing, and speaking skills. Outside evaluators assessed the students' written passages and audio tapes; reading levels were assessed by a Cloze test and student oral presentation skills were assessed using a teacher-made tool. Weekly anecdotal records of the ISR strategies were kept by the researcher. At the end of the course students wrote a passage and gave an oral presentation which were both evaluated by outside evaluators.

Positive feedback was obtained from informal and formal student interviews, from student and teacher weekly logs and faculty observers, context examinations, and the assessments of outside evaluators. The students commented that they had gained confidence in themselves, were stimulated to learn, and felt that they had attained a greater level of understanding of the nursing course content. Evaluations indicated that the students' basic skill levels were improved. Student retention in the course was 100 percent.

The reported success of the ISR program would strongly suggest that it is a positive method of addressing the needs of the high-risk student. Student participants reported that this method helped them develop basic skills that they needed in order to move forward in acquiring more complex skills that are so necessary for their professional success. ISR enables students to be in control of their learning process as opposed to practicing what has been termed "learned helplessness." Ultimately, this leads to improvements in their self confidence, ability to problem-solve and think critically. It is recommended that ISR programs be instituted within a curriculum.

Introduction

In 1985, the Association of American Colleges (AAC) discussed the crisis of undergraduate education in the '80s. They reported that there is a lack of integrity in the college education curriculum (AAC, 1985). For example, the report cites the complaints of the business community regarding difficulty in recruiting literate college graduates as evidence that the education received by the average college student is substandard. This conclusion is disturbing and demands an educational response from the academic community.

A primary cause of what AAC termed the "undergraduate educational crisis of the eighties" is not hard to identify. Astin reports that approximately half the incoming college students stated that they needed remediation in reading and study skills (Astin 1985). A straightforward solution to this problem would require, as Boyer recommends, that language and literacy be given top priority in entrance and placement examinations, complemented with intensive remediation for deficiencies in these areas (Boyer, 1987). The straightforward approach is, however, deceivingly simple.

Many educators feel that while remedial education has received increased attention, it remains one of the least successful college programs. These courses have the highest enrollments and costs (Lombardi, 1979), yet 90 percent of the students enrolled in remedial courses never complete them. They were taught by largely unprepared faculty who were told to "do the best that they could," which leads to the revolving door system (Roueche and Snow, 1977). A report by the NIE (National Institute of Education, 1985) states that the remedial courses required more reading and writing than the regular college classes. The students were taking fragmented skills courses with little relation to the rest of their college program, and were recipients of the "remedial student" label (Maxwell, 1980). There was little communication between (the usually part-time) faculty of remedial basic skills and the rest of the college. The regular faculty were not even aware of the remedial students in their class, nor of their specific learning needs, nor how to teach them (Roueche, 1984). Faculty disclaimed responsibility for the students not doing well, stating that the students were simply ill-prepared (Martin and Swindling, 1983).

Rather than focusing on developmental deficiencies, these programs challenge the student to utilize his strengths to compensate for skills that are lacking. Cross (1976) points out that those teachers who choose the developmental model have adopted the basic assumption that their students have the ability to be taught and to do well in school, and that remediation is to be seen as part of a developmental program.

A developmental skills study program developed at La Guardia Community College consisted of a two-phase approach. The first phase is a basic skills program, followed by an integrated learning skills model in traditional college courses (Hoban, 1983a). This was the beginning of what has been termed "multiple creative programs" (Donovan, 1985) and introduced an Integrated Skills Reinforcement (ISR) approach (Anderson et al., 1983). ISR programs introduce strategies that teach basic skills within the syllabi of traditional college courses. This approach to teaching helps to eliminate what has been termed the "high risk course", (i.e. a course that tends to induce student attrition) and meets the needs of the high risk student (Blanc, et. al., 1983). The City University of New York evaluated the success of the ISR program and found a decrease in attrition among students who were fortunate enough to be enrolled in the ISR program (Hoban, 1983).

The Integrated Skills Reinforcement (ISR) method, first introduced at La Guardia College, is a holistic approach to developing reading, writing, listening and oral skills. ISR first assesses the student's ability in these skill areas and then provides the student with an integrated course framework within which to improve these skills to accomplish course objectives.

The ISR program teaches faculty how to teach their discipline while reinforcing the basic reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. It also offers teaching and learning strategies to help students develop these skills. Students in these courses are able to succeed in other college courses (Hoban, 1983). ISR provides a framework for the students to develop these skills with instructor guidance and removes the total student dependency on the instructor, as with remediation approaches. The student is encouraged to strengthen his skills and apply them to all his endeavors.

This method of instruction has received positive evaluations and acceptance both within the CUNY system and from outside evaluators as well. In a 1978 CUNY study on the efficacy of the ISR method at La Guardia Community College, evaluators concluded that the attrition rate among La Guardia students who entered college with a need for basic skills instruction was lower than the attrition rate of La Guardia's other students. This conclusion contrasts with the situation at other CUNY colleges where the skills-deficient students had a rate of attrition higher than the average rate among the general population (Hoban, 1983).

Project Setting

This research project is composed of the preparation of a Teacher's Guide, a Learner's Guide and the implementation of the ISR method in a senior year R.N. baccalaureate program at a two year CUNY college. This course, titled "Nursing Management of Complex Clients I, " is a required nursing course in the first semester of the senior year. The course consists of a three hour per week theory component. ISR strategies were not only used to help the student learn the course content, but simultaneously to reinforce basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

The student enrollment in the nursing division is 100 percent minority students who are predominantly black and from the West Indies. The students have all passed the college-wide examination or taken remediation courses in their educational career (often many years ago). Due to a lack of continuous exercise of these skills, completion of remediation courses is often not reflected in students' performance. The students have multiple roles and have difficulties that are characteristic of the adult learners. They have poor basic skills, and many are foreigners who completed their past education in a different educational system. They exhibit poor time management and study skills.

A developmental program such as ISR is especially suited for these students as it can meet them on their own level, assist them in improving their skills, and it is a "success-oriented" course designed to build their self-esteem.

Project Description

This project used the ISR method to teach an advanced Pediatric Nursing course. The course formerly placed an emphasis on content that described the nursing role in dealing with complex high-risk families. The course was redesigned to be a student-centered content based course with materials and strategies to assist students in reading, writing and oral skills. A learning guide and an instructor's guide were developed for use in the course. The learning guide provides clear direction for the students in how to navigate through the course and complete the course requirements. As part of the course, students are assigned planned small group work. This enables them to improve verbal skills and to be active learners as they engage in reading, writing, speaking and listening exercises even as they explore new concepts in nursing. Developing oral and written skills will be particularly emphasized because these skills play a primary role in maintaining nursing records and interacting with clients and colleagues in the day to day business in the nursing profession.

Each class session had a content focus which was centered around a sequence of reading activities, previously assigned for homework, modeled after one of the methods introduced by Burris (1987). A brief writing assignment is completed before each class, as suggested by Allen, Bowers and Dickelman (1989), and the class splits up into groups to discuss the writing assignment. The group discussion is modeled after Menikheim and Ryden (1985) who used group discussion for improving interpersonal skills. Within the groups, much time is spent on multiple rewrites of the brief writing assignment as suggested by Pinkava and Haviland (1984). In each class, one of the groups is also given (on a rotating basis) a sample medical case history based on the class topic. At the end of class one spokesman from each of the groups gives an oral presentation on a case study of the patient that is related to the class topic, modeled after Geisler's (1987) emphasis on a public oral presentation and on the case study focus of Pinkava and Haviland. In addition, every student is required to maintain a log which chronicles the three main points of each lecture, similar to Jackson's (1987) emphasis on the clinical log.

Each student uses a learning guide, which contains the assignments for the reading, writing and oral exercises, along with the regular course textbook which contains the reading material.

The instructor's guide was developed to assist the instructor in conducting the course using the ISR method. Included in the instructor's guide are a policy statement, a set of answers to the assessment exercises to assist the instructor to grade them, a section to guide the instructor in previewing the chapter in class prior to assigning the reading homework, focus points for class discussions, discussion questions, and wrap-up questions. The instructor's guide offers clear aides for questioning students and incorporating them as active listeners.

The following describes how the developmental assessment was implemented, with the emphasis on the writing and oral skills. On the first day of class the student completed assessments in reading (the Cloze test), writing, and oral presentation, and filled out a general student questionnaire about their present and past course work. The students were asked to write a brief passage and to tell the class about the passage they had written. This brief writing assignment was holistically scored by the faculty in the writing center. The faculty used the writing samples to assess grammatical and organizational ability of the students. The speakers were audio taped and evaluated based on a presenter evaluation form (which is included with the learning guide). The audio tape was evaluated by a speech expert. Throughout the semester the students had three brief writing assignments and at least two oral presentations in which they received both peer review and instructor feedback. At the end of the semester a final writing passage was holistically scored and a final oral presentation was audio taped and evaluated. The results of these assessments were used as a basis for discussion about progress in writing and speaking ability as a result of the ISR process.

Specific assessment strategies included:

1. A teacher's anecdotal log of the course and the student use of learning/teaching guide as the course progresses. The log includes instructor and student reactions to various assignments, demands and frustrations and successes experienced in attempting to implement the ISR method. There also was a videotape of a class session.
2. A comparison of the student's writing abilities at the beginning of the course and at the end of the course. This helped to relate an increased emphasis on writing with an improvement in overall writing ability. The scores of the holistic assessment were the basis for the discussion of the outcomes of the ISR writing strategy implementations.
3. A comparison of student's speaking ability at the beginning of the course and at the end of the course. The results of the presenter's evaluation tool and the evaluation of the audio tapes were the basis for the discussion of the effects of the oral strategies in the course.
4. The use of a pencil and paper evaluation

tool administered to the students in order to determine the students' response to the course strategies. The evaluation tool consists of a two-page questionnaire consisting of open ended questions for the students to answer and closed-ended statements for them to respond "Agree" or "Disagree." A mid-semester informal interview with the students was also conducted to evaluate their ongoing response to the ISR strategies.

Outcomes

The exit assessment demonstrated that the students experienced an overall improvement in their basic skills. The students commented that the reading preview exercises helped them to focus on important points, made them more aware of the course contents, enabled them to participate in class discussions, and motivated them to read the text in its entirety. The *previewing activity* helped to alleviate the age-old problem of student's lack of preparedness for class. After completing the previewing activity, the students were aware of what was expected of them and motivated to fulfill that expectation. The *reading guide* questions were helpful in soliciting written answers while also functioning as a study guide, improving concentration, and easing memorization. The *vocabulary* exercises clarified word meanings to facilitate reading comprehension.

The writing assignments were met with fear and frustration. Nevertheless, the students found that the process of producing drafts provided them with direction in improving their writing skills. The students commented that they became aware of writing to an audience, use of proper sentence structure, and grammar. In a positive setting, they learned to apply writing concepts that they had previously learned.

The oral component was met with the most resistance. Nursing students need to have good oral presentation skills to facilitate their professional tasks of communicating to health care team members on the job. Yet, the students had not been used to public speaking at all, even in the classroom. Through small group discussion and formal presentations, the students reported an increased ability to express themselves to a new audience. They learned how to organize their thoughts and speak clearly, and in general the students increased their willingness to participate in discussions.

Increasing Student Motivation

In a content-oriented course such as Advanced Pediatric Nursing, which focuses so heavily on the written and spoken word, it is necessary to actively involve the students and motivate them to use (and improve) their basic skills. Stanford Erickson (1984) noted that choosing teaching strategies that take into account the past experiences, learning styles, and existing knowledge level of the students enables a teacher to motivate the student to become involved in the learning process. In following Erickson's philosophy of education, the ISR approach de-emphasizes the use of drilling techniques and the "drumming in" of facts which tend to turn off students.

One way that ISR works to overcome student passivity is by emphasizing collaboration through student-centered discussion groups. McKeachie (1986) studied the use of student-centered discussion groups and found that they particularly benefited students whose performance were below the mean. He found that the students that participated in this program scored comparably on final examinations, but were more motivated and curious than those who studied in a traditional format.

The students seem to have reacted positively to the diverse methods employed. In the student evaluations, debriefing, and in their case reports, the students demonstrated much improvement in their ability to respond to clients in high-risk situations, and in caring for clients in general. They also expressed enthusiasm for the learning approach and demonstrated greater accomplishment of cognitive learning outcomes. They enjoyed teaching the class using diverse teaching methods.

The focus of the Kolb method on the development of holistic learning and of "whole-brain" education is an educational approach that is well suited for giving nurses the particular tools necessary for succeeding in the clinical area. The holistic approach does not merely emphasize static content-focused learning, "but emphasizes learning how to learn, becoming a life-long learner, and how to become flexible and open to change" (Kolb, 1984). Nurses are confronted with complex problems and hence need to be lifelong learners and problem solvers (Holbert and Thomas, 1988). Nurses today need to solve problems creatively and to think critically and the ISR approach is well suited to developing these capabilities.

The discussion method fostered by the ISR approach allows for the development of verbal skills, but also gives the students practice in evaluating situations, and applying knowledge to make nursing decisions. In a study of small group teaching (using group discussions), McKenzie (1983) found increased ability of students to learn independently.

The development of critical thinking abilities is especially important for nursing students. Berger (1984) noted that the nursing process is the same as the critical thinking criteria set up by Watson and Glaser:

(1) ability to define a problem

(2) ability to select pertinent information for the solution

(3) ability to recognize stated and unstated assumptions

(4) ability to formulate and select relevant and promising hypotheses

(5) ability to draw valid conclusions and to judge the validity of inferences.

Baccalaureate nursing students consistently score higher than liberal arts students on the Watson & Glaser critical thinking appraisal (Berger, 1984). It is probable that nursing students would benefit even more from group work in the educational process.

The value of collaborative learning in developing student proficiency in judgment, critical thinking, analytical and creative skills cannot be over-estimated. This is especially important for the nursing student, as previously stated. In my own experience, small group work has succeeded in developing the students to acquire a more holistic, comprehensive, and analytical view of situations. As an example, the student's brief writing assignments were initially singularly focused, and after some weeks of group work they began to become more complex and multi-faceted.

The ISR model is one that involves risks and challenges that affect student learning. ISR actively involves the students in the learning process, with clear expectations placed on them, and relies on the existence and the development of communication skills. There are qualitative and quantitative evaluations designed to measure learning. The development of basic skills, critical thinking, and "whole brain" thinking are outcomes of this approach.

Most of our students are non-traditional learners. We must become more attentive to conditions and methodologies of their strengths in learning. We must be able to take risks, to relinquish our comfortable and traditional practices, and to replace them with innovative proactive approaches. The ISR approach responds to the needs of all of our students, and promises to deliver on our democratic ideals of universal access and excellence in education.

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It's The Soul Afraid Of Dying That Never Learns To Live

Larry D. Dorrell

Within the American educational system one can find a number of students hanging on the fringes. These students are not motivated and likewise not involved in their education. Parents of these children seldom appreciate them or understand why they are not motivated. Classroom teachers are convinced that at risk students do not belong in regular classrooms and do little to support them. Too often the local community, state and national policy makers have considered them as unimportant and disposable. No wonder the "persistence to graduate" from America's high schools is only in the seventy percent range. As far back as many of these students can remember, their parents, peers, teachers and community have been making it clear to them that they are failures.

Failure as a Diagnostic Tool

The American educational system has contributed to that perception by using failure as a diagnostic tool. By noting failure and not encouraging success, the current climate of the "test" as an indicator of successful teaching and education has forced the teacher to teach to a test and to do little towards getting to know or care about their students, who need them the most.

Failure as a Result of Educational Reform

Educational reformers have a fascination with testing and often call for students to achieve above the national average. Reformers seem to be unaware of the fact that on a standardized test it is automatic that fifty percent of those tested will not be able to claim the pride of Lake

Wobegon where all the children are above average. The 1983 report *A National At Risk* resulted in a more rigorous curriculum and increased graduation requirements with little or nor assistance provided students who were barely hanging on by their fingertips under the old system. Those students are now at an even greater risk.

Do Not Accept Failure, But Encourage Success

What America's educators need to understand is that they will be unable to teach at-risk students until the at-risk students know that their teacher cares about them. Teacher education institutions must prepare their teachers to teach students and not subjects. They must send new teachers into the field with an understanding of what can be accomplished with at-risk youth through positive encouragement.

Teachers must have an understanding and appreciation of the world of the at-risk student. They must encourage success and not discourage those students by reminding them of their failure. Often this means teaching students that there is nothing wrong with failure. The greatest failure of all is not to learn from failure and not to get up immediately and apply new skills to master problems and to succeed.

America's educators daily face students who have never learned to live because they are afraid of dying. Students who have little that is positive within their lives, have parents and peers who often provide them with direct and indirect evidence of their inability to be successful. Teachers who validate that perceived sense of worthlessness hinder the students' ability to like themselves and thus to be successful. The best evidence of future success is past success. Too many of America's students do not have that basis of past success upon which to build for the future.

Teach 'em What George Herman "Babe" Ruth Knew

The classroom teacher who is aware of the need for positive reinforcement and provides an opportunity for success will be able to obtain a degree of achievement among marginal students. The teacher who can teach their students what George Herman Ruth knew will be able to impact many lives.

Babe Ruth knew that if he was going to hit a home run, or even get on base, that he was going to have to swing at the ball. Too many of America's marginal students do not know that, nor do they have the confidence to take a chance.

The classroom teacher who can inspire students at all levels of ability to take chances will have positive effects upon most of his students. Students need to know that when they refuse to take chances they have accepted failure. All students need teachers who are able to let their students know that there is nothing wrong with taking a chance and failing; that the greatest failure is not to have tried at all. The second greatest failure is to fail and not learn from failure, to give up and try no more.

Many of the students in America's classrooms have failed before and will fail again. But, if they know what George Herman Ruth knew, they will dust themselves off and step up to the plate and will again swing at the ball. Those students who are afraid to swing at the ball have given in to failure. To be afraid to take chances, to swing at the ball is simply to limit their possibilities for an education.

At-risk students need to know that their teachers care and that they can fail and their teacher will not note their failure, but rather encourage them in their success. Teachers need to know that nothing brings about more success than encouragement to learn from failure and not to accept failure as a state of being or a way of life.

You Have To Save The World, One Little Piece At A Time

A seven-year-old boy named Jonathan attends a small elementary where no one seems to know him. He's just another kid who does not seem to be able to achieve. He appears to his teacher to be unmotivated and his mother thinks he daydreams a lot, but she does not have time to help involve him in anything. She is a single parent working three part-time jobs, trying to make ends meet.

Jonathan has not been a real discipline problem. He comes to school every day, but he does not seem to have any friends. He appears to be a loner. His teacher has not called on him in class for over a month. She just got tired of waiting for a response.

He is already behind a grade level in reading, but he does not cause any trouble. He is just there. Often the teacher, classroom and school give little notice or concern to this seven-year-old boy named Jonathan. In fact, some in school do not even know his name. No one at school really knows Jonathan.

Jonathan is in danger of being labeled, but what label should be placed upon him? Before that fateful decision is made, maybe those who will make that decision should walk a mile in his shoes.

Let me tell you about an experience in Jonathan's life which occurred during his first year in school. Like most children in kindergarten, Jonathan came to school with enthusiasm. He offered a bright face with a desire to learn. It was an experience that he had little preparation for, but he entered that new phase in his life with great expectation.

Jonathan's experiences at school too often reflected the events that occurred the first of September during his kindergarten year. Jonathan was up early getting all his things collected for school. Outside, the weather had turned rather cool for September and the roll of distant thunder could be heard over Jonathan's efforts to get ready for school.

Jonathan had to make his own breakfast, since his mother was always busy getting ready for her second job of the day as a waitress at the local coffee shop. The events of that morning were to have a lasting impact upon the live of Jonathan. He had managed to get everything in place and was in the process of pouring some milk over his Cheerios when the milk slipped out of his small hands. It hit the floor with such an impact that the carton broke open. Jonathan rushed to pick it up as his mother entered the kitchen.

"What in the world are you doing, now?" screamed his mother. Before he could respond, she continued: "You are always causing me problems. How do you expect me to be able to afford milk for you when you spill it on the floor? I have to work all the time and you just seem to cost me more and more. You are more trouble than you are worth. If I could do it all over again, I would not have had you at all. I wish that you had never been born! Now get that picked up, and go on to school! You don't deserve any breakfast."

Jonathan's mother did not really hate him. She really loved him, but like many parents, she could not express that love because she was burdened with the frustrations and concerns of life: paying bills and providing for their physical needs. But that morning, as the roll of distant thunder echoed in the background, she missed a real opportunity to help Jonathan grow into the responsibility that she desired. The opportunity to help Jonathan learn from failure was completely missed.

Think what might have happened if she could have said to Jonathan: "Here, let me help you clean that up. You know, Johnny, we need to be more careful, but are you alright? Good, Johnny, I'm glad you were not hurt. You know you are real special to me. You are the only man in our house and I'm glad that you can help me so that I can get to work on time. Johnny, there is another half of a gallon of milk in the refrigerator. I have to get off to work. Are you sure you'll be alright? Thanks for being my big man. You work hard at school and I will bring you something special." But Jonathan's mother was too caught up in her own things to help Jonathan deal with what to him was a crisis.

After Jonathan's mother left, he burst into tears. He took too long just sitting there crying. The bus had arrived and he could hear the honk of its horn. Out of the door went Jonathan, leaving behind his stuff for school with his boots unbuckled and trying to struggle with his jacket. Just before he got to the bus the buckles on his boots became entangled and Jonathan took a tumble.

Jonathan could hear the laughter of the students on the bus as he tried to pick himself up. The bus driver called out: "Would you get with it! I'm getting tired of always having to wait on a dummy like you! I have other good students to get to school on time. Now get on this bus and find a seat and don't move."

As Jonathan rode the bus to school to the continuing laughter of other students, he was sure that his mother must have been right about him. When they arrived at school the bus driver announced: "Everyone but the dummy go ahead and get off." The driver kept Jonathan on the bus to again admonish him for causing the other students to be late for school.

When Jonathan finally got off the bus and headed for the building, the bell was ringing. He rushed through the door, running for his classroom. But, Mrs. Smith was on hall duty. She stopped him with: "Where do you think you are going in such a hurry, young man? You know that we do not allow you to run in the school building. Now go back to the front door and walk to you classroom, like a proper young man. If I ever catch you running in the hall again, you are going to wind up in Mr. Adam's office!"

Jonathan made his way to the front door and walked back down the hall to his room. When he arrived he heard: "Well, it's about time you got here! Do you expect us to wait class for you all day? For this, you will just have to do without your recess! Now don't take all day getting you boots and coat put up."

Jonathan placed his coat and boots with those of the other children and went to his seat. He no longer had enthusiasm for learning. Everyone seemed to be against him. While he sat there trying to get himself together, his teacher asked for the papers he was to bring with him. Fear shot through Jonathan's little heart. He had left them at home. He had forgotten all about his papers when his mother had fussed at him. He tried to explain to his teacher about his papers. "Not another 'dog ate your homework' excuse!" she exclaimed. "Do you think I was born yesterday? That does it. Go to the office and just explain yourself to Mr. Adams."

Now, less than thirty minutes into the school day, Jonathan was seated in the principal's office, waiting for another person to validate his worthlessness. Jonathan was not having a good day. In fact, he wasn't even having a poor day. His mother, the bus driver, and teachers were all displeased with him. His peers laughed at him. Jonathan did not have the will to resist.

The unfortunate part of Jonathan's story is that it could have been avoided if someone had cared enough to encourage him; his mother, the bus driver, Mrs. Smith in the hallway, or his teacher. They all missed opportunities to show a young life the joys of school and learning. All missed their chance.

Since that day in early September of his kindergarten year, Jonathan has simply quit trying. After all, no one cared for him and they had made that rather clear. Thus the educational system, for lack of caring community, had lost part of its future because everyone was too busy with their own concerns to see that they were destroying a young life.

Jonathan is now a statistic. He has a number of indicators that make him at risk of failure within the educational system. And since he is at-risk at school, he will most likely be at-risk throughout life.

Why? Because no one within his life showed him any interest or care. No one said, "Johnny, we believe in you." No one took the time to save this little valuable piece of the world.

A Caring Community

If America's educational system is going to be able to help Jonathan and others like him to live productive lives, they must take a leadership role in providing a caring community within the school. Before students are required to do paper and pencil work, the school must provide a caring environment for success. The classroom teacher and the school must first teach students to like themselves, to get along with others, and what is right and wrong before any attempt should be made to teach content. Students need a basis upon which to build for a future of success before they are forced into an educational environment that might cause them to give up.

Cross-cultural Counseling: Implications for Counselor Education

Patrice Gilliam-Gist

A new problem faced by counselors in the public school setting is the increasing diversity of the public school population. According to the 1980 census report, racial-ethnic minorities were 16 percent of the total U.S. population. In the state of South Carolina, 1980 census figures show that racial-ethnic minorities were 31.2 percent of the total population, and this figure is projected to approach 34 percent by 2010. The language and cultural differences that these individuals espouse present a challenge for some human service professionals. This complex task of being recognized, respected, and accepted by a society that is based on similarities, not differences, makes it necessary for practitioners to be trained for work in cross-cultural settings.

Racial and ethnic minority group populations have special counseling needs and yet tend to be underserviced by professionals. There are many conflicts and problems that develop as a result of being ethnically, racially, and/or culturally different. Most counseling programs have not prepared culturally and racially sensitive counselors with enthusiasm (McDanials & Parker, 1977; Mitchel, 1971; Sue, 1977). Research on counselor education by McFadden and Wilson (1977) concluded that fewer than 1 percent of counselor educators require their students to study non-white cultures. Bernal and Padilla (1982) found that psychology faculty members indicated that preparing clinical psychologists to work with minorities was "somewhat important." However, the authors also provided ample evidence that such preparation actually received minor attention.

The American Psychological Association (APA) sponsored a conference in Vail, Colorado (Korman, 1974), which strongly recommended that the counseling of persons of culturally diverse backgrounds by persons who are not trained to work with such groups should be regarded as unethical. Further, in 1977, the Association for Non-White Concerns took the position that individuals of different ethnicity need to be assured that the counselor is indeed competent in the treatment of their specific cultural needs in addition to emotional needs. The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) (1978) went on record recommending that counselor preparation should provide counselors with skills in the identification of developmental tasks, objectives, and strategies for program implementation and evaluation appropriate to the specific populations served.

Bernal and Padilla (1982) identified the following problems in the provision of mental health services to the ethnically different: (a) minority groups in this country are underserviced by the National Public Health System (b) there is a severe shortage of ethnic minority professionals in the mental health field (c) this shortage of minority professionals is not being sufficiently addressed at the graduate level through accurate recruitment programs (d) the dearth of minority faculty in graduate education parallels the minority student underrepresentation and demonstrates a heightened lack of growth (e) a large proportion of minority graduates of professional training institutions find employment in clinical as well as applied research settings which serve minorities (p. 780).

Specific to counselor education, McFadden, Quinn, and Sweeney (1978) reported that counselor preparation suffered from all of the problems listed by Bernal and Padilla (1982). Further, McFadden et al., (1978) reported that insufficient numbers of non-white faculty and the lack of cross-cultural experiences for counselors only perpetuated the very conditions that guidance services are purported to alleviate. In addition, they concluded that training programs must reflect the multicultural nature of this society if guidance services are to be effective.

Additional rationale for the need for counselors to be cross-culturally trained include (a) the likelihood of America's minority population will continue to experience discrimination (Bernal & Padilla, 1982); (b) the contention that the counseling needs of minorities remains unmet; (c) the refusal of some ethnic minorities to be assimilated into mainstream society; (d) the presence of minorities in all major institutions, i.e., mental health, schools, postsecondary environments, and the workplace.

The failure to create a realistic understanding of minority populations in America has been noted in the literature by many writers (Byrd, 1971; Ruiz & Padilla, 1974; Sue, D. W., & Sue, S., 1972; Sue, 1981, Sumade, 1975; Thomas & Sillen, 1972). In fact, Sue (1981) and Hillard (1986) found that certain practices have greatly harmed minorities by ignoring them, maintaining false stereotypes and/or distorting their lifestyle.

An example of this contention can be seen in the Genetic Deficiency Model which depicted blacks and other ethnic minorities as uneducable and intellectually inferior. The writings of Shuey (1966), Hensin (1969) Hernstein (1971), and Shockley (1972) all reflect the effects of this model. Sue (1981) stated that the use of such terms implies that to be different was to be deviant, pathological, or sick.

The Civil Rights Movement and the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 highlighted areas with respect to traditional mental health practices that heretofore had received little attention. The impetus of this movement as well as other societal events, made mental health practitioners aware of the need to address problems and concerns of ethnic minority groups in America. Affirmative Action Guidelines were established to ensure accessibility to university study and to equal employment opportunities. Both areas were relevant to cross-cultural education (Arrendo, 1985).

Cross-cultural counseling, the by-product of the social movements of the '60s and early '70s, emphasized the notion that practitioners must be adequately trained to meet the needs of America's cultural and minority groups. Although the term in its broadest sense suggested that all cultural groups (women, ethnic minorities, the elderly, handicapped, and homosexuals) should be included under this umbrella, the scope of this concept did not lend itself to reaching this goal (DeBlassie, 1974; Pedersen, Lonner & Draguns, 1976; and Sue, 1977). Therefore, proponents suggested the central aims of cross-cultural counseling should be limited to those ethnic minority groups that traditionally had been victims of discrimination and oppression because of their unique characteristics (Dillard, 1983). These groups, historically, included Native Americans, Asian-Americans, blacks, Hispanics and other ethnic minorities.

It is important to note that while other ethnic minority groups have also been the victims of discrimination and oppression and have counseling needs that are not adequately addressed by traditional approaches, emphasis is on blacks, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanics. This decision is affected primarily by group characteristics, the availability of information on these groups in the literature, the impact these groups have had on our society from a historical perspective, and the percent of the total population that these groups represent.

The American Psychological Association (APA), in an attempt to address the growing concerns of America's ethnic minorities, recommended that the counseling of persons from culturally diverse backgrounds by persons not trained or competent to work with such groups should be regarded as unethical (Koram, 1974). In an examination of counselor education programs, Copeland (1982) concluded that much is yet to be done to incorporate the needs of America's ethnic minorities into the training of students (Arrendo-Dowd and Gonsalves 1980; Bernal and Padilla 1982; Sue, 1981). The field of counseling, however, is not the only area where there has been a push for relevant training at the preservice level. Psychotherapists, teachers and other practitioners have also voiced concern that training programs do not afford experiences at the preservice level (Sue, 1981; Arrendo, 1985).

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and Supervision (NCATE) and the American Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) have also set the stage for the training of practitioners to work with cross-cultural clients. NCATE recommended that postsecondary institutions give evidence of planning for multicultural education in their teacher education curriculum including both the general and professional studies component. Further, NCATE recommended that experiences should be made available to trainees which include values clarification, the dynamics of diverse cultures, racism and sexism, and linguistic variation patterns among the culturally diverse (NCATE Standard 2.11, 1979). ACES went on record as recommending that counselor preparation provide counselors with skills in the developmental tasks, objectives, and strategies for program implementation and evaluation appropriate to programs served. ACES support for multicultural experiences was further evidenced in its recommendation that training programs provide training experiences in social and cultural foundations, i.e., ethnic group subcultures, sexism, cultural mores, etc. (ACES standards, 1979).

While the recommendations of these agencies speak directly to the training of counselors and teachers entering programs in the 1980's, a large number of practitioners who entered prior to this time are not subjected to these requirements. These practitioners, however, continue to provide services to the culturally different. Therefore, however formidable a task it may be, cross-cultural education must become a part of existing training programs at the preservice and inservice levels.

The need to evaluate cross-cultural counseling theories and practices as well as traditional theoretical approaches has been documented in the literature (Copeland, 1979, 1982; Gunnings & Simpkins, 1972; Smith, 1985: Sue, S., 1981). As indicated in the literature, to date, there does not exist a consensus on what theories, approaches and practices should be used with ethnic minority groups. Hilliard (1986) pointed out that research in the field of cross-cultural counseling has been relatively subjective. He asserted that there was a need to conduct research to provide evidence to support the various existing theories on cross-cultural counseling as well as to add to traditional counseling approaches. Hilliard also asserted that as multicultural counseling becomes more widely recognized as a priority, there will exist a greater need to conduct empirical research.

Lifelong Learning: A Rationale for Educational Practices for Students At Risk

Peter C. Mulvaney

Berkshire Junior-Senior High School Cannan, New York, educates in 240 at risk adjudicated male youth sent to the Berkshire Farm Center and Services for Youth by the courts of New York State. The population is a composite of non-felonious juvenile delinquents under the supervision of the Division for Youth, or persons in need of supervision (PINS) under the direction of the Department of Social Services.

Drug dealers, chronic drug users, truants, thieves, sexual victims and perpetrators, all are to some degree emotionally disturbed, touched with varying degrees of conduct disorder, and seriously lacking in a normal degree of self-esteem. The products of hostile, abusive environments and highly dysfunctional families, these dangerous victims are our student body.

Our staff and faculty find them charming, interesting and searching for identity. Our mission is to instill these youth with self-esteem and aspirations for a future while improving their educational skills.

Educational success has come to us in different forms, but most measurably in improved reading and math scores as measured by the revised Woodcock-Johnson-Revised Achievement Tests. Our student's average growth is one-and-one-half years in each category. More significantly, percent gain two years or more in a year. Twenty-five percent do not gain a year's growth.

We are successful, and though love and nurturance are most evident, the organization's goals, practices, and philosophy are the essential girders. Those principles and practices are observable, and can become the grounding structure for other programs designed to support marginal students in less threatened straits.

Critical, essential, and fundamental is the delineation of a philosophical basis for the organization. Whether stated or not, every organization has an organizational culture rooted in a belief system stemming from its working philosophy. Students at risk must be valued by those around them. Their lives must be perceived as meaningful and full of potential. Improved behavior and achievement flow from expectations held by mentors. Not only must the entire staff know the organization's beliefs and goals, they must accept them so that they are modeled, shared and reflected.

It is my contention that the education industry has not committed itself to serving the at-risk student. The philosophical basis of the industry is predisposed against the examination of who the at-risk student is, and how he is managed, excluded and alienated, which are common themes in papers addressing the dilemma of educating these students. Explanations for the failure of education to serve these students frequently are based upon societal, economic, and cultural reasons. Understanding these issues is paramount in order to comprehensively attack the roots of the problem. Educators will wait long indeed, though, if they delay the delivery of services to this population until the economic, political and social conditions are supportive. What is needed, and is deliverable, is a commitment by educators that we will develop a philosophical commitment to these students so that they can be educated. Current practices, certainly proven by the statistics, indicate we have not yet made this decision.

Anecdotal history of classrooms abound with this failure, which leads the industry in directions which compound the problem. Any elementary principal can tell you the two most sensitive issues they face each year. Normally in May, teachers must notify parents what student will not be promoted. Research indicates this decision has significant impact on the future of at-risk students propelling them into a failure chain based upon demeaned self-esteem. The child's confidence is significantly challenged, and unfortunately, the research indicates these retentions are normally not based upon objective criteria nor do they lead to positive educational experiences the following year. Instead these decisions are frequently based upon subjective criteria that foist themselves upon the principal in political ways. Unless the school has a retention system the principal will be caught without a philosophical base and the ill-advised retentions will be made. Until my school devised a retention system, when I was an elementary principal, I felt I had to support my teachers who were challenged by angry parents. Our failure on this issue does not need a French Revolution, it needs an understanding that children learn differently in different way at different times and we must always be sensitive to their self-esteem.

Parents know this. Parents know different teachers are better than others. September's assignment of students to teachers is the second political pressure cooker for principals. The seriousness of this decision indicates how well parents realize the importance of skilled teachers. It underscores the importance that advocates of at-risk students must give to the selection of teachers designated to help develop these children. Studies indicate our lag in educational achievement, as compared to other countries, could be considerably improved if we were to upgrade the achievement levels of our at-risk population. This can be done.

Frequently educators attack the children, not the behavior that they disapprove, and naturally the negative behavior increases. This cycle is particularly true of the at-risk popula-tion, because their self-esteem is more fragile than their peers. Too often we mistake their bravado, impulsivity and aggression and do not realize that they feel quite inadequate and anxious. Instead of trying to change behavior, we attack the person, continuing to reinforce the failure chain.

Each fall a new class of high school freshman takes up sports. Training rules are promulgated and invariably students are dismissed from teams for infractions. As we ask students to become aggressive, assertive, and individualistic, we condemn some who do not comply. I have lost this argument before, but I still tell coaches that a fourteen-year-old cannot smoke or drink during practice, and won't that help him become a more confident eighteen-year-old?

"A bad apple spoils the barrel." Somehow I do not accept that. I believe our failure to have a consistent position that supports all children places the coach in an untenable political position. He is expected to maintain certain rules which, in effect, contribute to the spiraling problem of students at risk. His decision contributes to the alienation process.

Who has not seen students suspended for truancy? Where is the logic? How does this change behavior? Again, the system reinforces the alienation process because it does not have an alternative. Since the system does not have a philosophy supporting endangered students, it accelerates their deterioration.

Clearly the first step the industry must take is to establish the goal that students are valuable, are to be prized, developed and taught. We must suffer through digressive behaviors as they mature. We must never contribute to their alienation and deterioration by condemning their person instead of redirecting their behavior.

Although this is a Herculean task, it is a problem within education, and hence it can be addressed without waiting for outside forces to give it impetus. It demands a new belief system with its attending decisions and processes. This is an intellectual agreement that the education industry can develop and deliver to society at large. It isn't necessary to await society's response.

Once a new commitment is reached, educators can approach children with greater confidence. Their new role is to guarantee success in each child. The successes will generate the self-esteem necessary for continued growth and healthy maturation, which will lead to broader achievement. Success should also bring greater personal stability which would have healthy implications for society at large.

Supplementing the commitment to all children is recognition that learning is now a life-long activity. It is especially vital for students at risk whose life cycles frequently exclude them from the routine educational progression. But if it is recognized that learning is ongoing, then educators can concentrate on developing the skills that permit learning. Students need not be penalized for cultural and content gaps. Although controversy abounds on this issue, clearly one's instincts must support the notion that reading, writing, computational and cognitive skills are more necessary to guarantee the opinions of life learning than particular content. The at risk student must have these skills in order to compete in the modern work force.

Our philosophy is centered upon a humanistic tradition that extends respect for the dignity of all men and accepts the notion all students can learn, albeit, differently and at varying times. Derived from that is the motto of our school, "Success Breads Success." Freed from the primary control of syllabi, teachers are able to prepare classes which reluctant learners can master, gain in skills, and actually improve their educational knowledge.

Two other principles appear necessary. Food, clothing, shelter and basic physical and psychological security have to be provided before the at risk student can become futuristic. Maslow applied. Only a futuristic outlook can generate motivation. Finally, a concrete, specified and relatively detailed student management system with clear consequences is required to provide the orderliness necessary for the delivery system.

The goals of the program clarify operations and assist decision making. They are as follows:

- **Improve Self-Esteem**
  - The student must have the confidence to live and to participate in life's healthy experiences.
- **Improve Learning**
  - As measured by gains in skills.
  - As measured on mastery skills.
- **Improve Egos**
  - Psychological stabilization and positive socialization as reflected in questionnaires and as documented in the management system.

Clear goals permit the development of effective practices and policies.

PRACTICES

Attendance: The reluctant learner must be in school. Truancy and suspensions must be avoided. Although obvious, non-attendance must be clearly and creatively combated. A program cannot function efficiently without high attendance.

Promotions: Frequently at-risk students have been retained, often more than once. Evaluation of the student's skill level and general knowledge should determine program placement, not age. The goals drive the system.

Educational Trends: Improvement of a student's knowledge and skill base over time are more important that fitting a portion of achievement into time. Time, as well as achievement, is seen as flexible. Math I is divided into Math I-A and Math I-B. Together they constitute Math I. Over time, both are learned. What is most important is to lead the student to the belief that he can be successful.

Project Success

H.R. "Bill" Cheshire

During the 1989-90 school year, twenty 20 school systems operated Project Success programs. Sixteen were in the first year of operation, three in their second, and one in its third year. Approximately 25,000 students drop out of Georgia schools each year. Project Success is on the front line of our educational system combating this blockade to economic progress. This program targets the "most" at-risk youth in high school. Each school sets yearly goals to best serve its local needs. Most focused on reducing their dropout rate, preparing select students for the Georgia Basic Skills Test (BST), improving self-image, motivating students to achieve new academic growth, improve attendance, and overall student performance. The major objective is to produce a high school graduate eager to enter a post secondary vocational institute or meaningful employment. Therefore, the data presents real success. The following information was collected from the 20 end-of-the-year reports.

Team Concept

Each Project Success team consists of the coordinator, a paraprofessional, a language arts teacher, a math teacher and four vocational instructors. The team meets once or twice per week to discuss curriculum modification, student problems and progress, student career ladders, basic skills development and vocational relevant instruction. Utilizing the data from earlier vocational assessment, parent conferences and student interviews, the teams design individual vocational and academic assignment sheets. This information is used to document remedial processes, VOCA activities, and team motivational techniques geared to making the student productive in both the academic and vocational arena. The team concept works best with strong support of the local school system. The Project Success team concept demands blocked schedules in the four areas of instruction supported by a professional to document student progress. The coordinator serves as team leader.

The twenty coordinator reports indicate a busy school year . . . a sample—

Team meetings — 113
Hours spent in team meetings — 2100
Field trips — 95
News releases, speakers, exhibits, community events — 1318
Visits to technical institutes — 30
Visits with military representatives — 72

Dropout Reduction and Grade level Improvement

Project Success is designed to keep students in school — to help them graduate and become productive workers for a world market. Poor academic performance is the single best prediction of who drops out of school (Office of Education and Research — U. S. Department of Education). Project Success enrolled a segment of this student population that was (1) basically 9th and 10th grades, (2) over two grade levels below their actual grade placement in reading, language arts, and math; and (3) selected from the potential dropout category (100 percent).

The implementation of the team concept was a positive determiner in effecting a positive change in performance. Student histories, observations, and contacts developed patterns that led to daily activities geared toward making school interesting and meaningful. The team interaction and the "we care" attitude presented, through interlocking academic basic skills with vocational experiences, showed students that school could be fun and real — answering the question, "why learn this stuff?"

As a result of the Project Success interlocking concept and vocational academic remediation, an over 50 percent increase in grade level achievement was attained by the students. This is impressive, especially when compared to what was attained by the same students the year prior to Project Success participation. It was also noted that student achievement in the "regular" school environment (before entering the program) was 3/4 grade level a year. Participating schools reported a grade improvement of over 1.3 for 1989-90.

Considering that Project Success students have 100 percent possibility of dropping out of school (since students are selected from this population), the program was able to produce a dropout rate that was 20 percent less than that produced in the "regular" school arena. Dooly County reported only two students enrolled in Project Success dropped out. Lee County reduced its dropout rate from 8 percent in 1988-89 to 3 percent in 1989-90. Last school year, Haralson County High School reported a 13 percent dropout rate in the 10th grade and 18 percent in the 9th grade. After implementing the Project Success Program, the dropout rate was reduced to 7 percent and 5 percent respectively.

Discipline

A poor self-image and a general dislike for school cause many at-risk youth to become discipline problems for local administrators, local authorities and the team. Once the student begins to "like" school, discipline problems begin to disappear. This change of attitude does not come easily and quickly. Students labeled "high at-risk" who stay in school give credit to members of the Project Success team with statements that simply say — "they care about me." Several Project Success teams have been allowed to handle minor rule infractions, relieving the administration for more important tasks (saving county dollars and time). During 1988-89, the students were referred to local administrators a total of 2,545 times. In Project Success this was reduced by 50 percent.

Attendance

Some at-risk students miss an excessive number of days. This costs the local system in unproductive days and dollars. It costs a second time when the student repeats several (or all) courses because of absences, tardiness and lack of motivation. If the students does not fail, he/she usually misses so much material his/her grades suffer. Lack of attendance presents problems for his/her family, faculty, county school budget, and administration. Project Success teams used a variety of techniques to change this attitude of disinterest, including morning phone calls, home visits, rewards for attendance and taking a personal interest in each student. Several schools assigned 8-10 students to each team member to guide and coach through the year. The data from reports indicated a reduction of 32 percent in the number of days missed, when compared with the same student population attendance from the previous year.

Enrollment

Student selection is critical. Teams developed student profiles, including selection factors such as: lack of motivation, teacher referrals, attendance, attitude, projected failure in vocational education, economic difficulty, low test scores, reading problems, and poor self-image. Teams used a comprehensive vocational assessment investigating student career interest, ability, and aptitude. The present Project Success design is recommended for 9th and/or 10th grades. This is the point at which many students drop out of school. Approximately 1,500 students were enrolled in Project Success last school year. Team goals include strategies needed to turn the student away from negative influences and back toward positive activities that will keep the student occupied. Interesting courses and experiences provide the motivation for a personal goal of high school graduation.

These are critical years for students. The 1989-90 Project Success teams averaged 78 plus students per team. Most teams seem to feel they could accomplish more with approximately 60 students or 15 per blocked class. The language arts and math teachers are very outspoken. They feel a state of diminishing returns takes over when their classes exceed 15 students.

Grade Point Average

Coordinators reported various factors that caused GPA to improve. Many students lack motivation, good study skills, interest, positive self-image and have a proven track record of failure. The teams stressed cooperative learning, instruction that begins below the student's level but focused on mastering skills and hands-on experiences. The interlocking method requires basic skills taught and then practiced in the vocational laboratory. Teams are developing academic labs to reinforce their vocational instruction. Resource centers are an important part of each Project Success program. Student and teacher vocationally slanted materials are provided by grant funding. Students enjoy meaningful computer instruction and video tapes mixed with interlocking activities. VOCA is also responsible for GPA improvement. Countless team members use VOCA as a regular teaching tool. Many of the competitive activities are tied directly to competencies presented in each team member's curriculum guide. Project Success students are seeing D's and F's replaced with C's and B's.

The Basic Skills

Many students entered Project Success because test scores predicted difficulty with the 10th grade Georgia Basic Skills Test. The resource centers provided teaching software and vocationally slanted materials to reinforce academic basic skills and provide a means whereby students realized success. The Project Success coordinators compared their local programs with other local efforts to prepare students to pass the BST. The results reported are indicated below:

	READING	MATH	WRITING
Project Success Programs	89 percent	75 percent	86 percent
Local School Effort	60 percent	49 percent	64 percent

percent Passed BST

The interlocking of academic subject matter along with hands on vocational activities proved an ideal way to operate the learning experience. This team concept allowed for VOCA activities, prescriptive individualized instruction, career exploration, laboratory-based models. As a result, these strategies produced a significant difference. More students passed the BST.

Parents

Parents are required to approve of their students choice to enter Project Success. Coordinators used team members to assist with parent contacts and home visits. Several schools reported the establishment of parent support groups and involvement with VOCA. During 1989-90, the Project Success schools reported 976 home visits with a total of 3,897 parent contacts.

VOCA

The Project Success youth club (VOCA) gave each student the chance to belong — the first time for many. It allowed the student to experience the American way of life: freedom of speech, team work, competition, hard work and rewards. VOCA was found to be invaluable in reaching many students when all else has failed. Team teachers found it an excellent teaching tool.

Staff Development

Project Success coordinators must be certified CVAE coordinators. The paraprofessionals spent two weeks at the University of Georgia. Shenandoah Consulting and Training, Inc., provided one week of training for the entire team with follow-up visits to participating schools the first year of operation.

Summary

Data alone cannot tell the real success of these 20 programs. The real story of Project Success is best told by the students enrolled in the program. Project Success is making a difference. The real story may lie in the transformation of students from negative attitudinal beings to individuals with self-esteem preparing for the world of work. Project Success takes the at-risk youth and leads him toward graduation and then to a final goal of transition to postsecondary training or to a meaningful job with competencies needed in the world marketplace.

Linguistic and Behavioral Characteristics of At-Risk Children with Communication Disorders: Current Research

Ann M. Miniutti

Two groups of children who are greatly at risk in our society are children with behavioral and learning disorders. Research has determined that these two groups have underachievement and social-emotional problems in common. Whether or not they also have similar language problems is a question yet unanswered.

To examine this issue, the language skills of 27 children with behavioral disorders (BD), 27 children with learning disabilities (LD), and 26 normal achieving children (NA) six to nine years of age were compared on the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals - Revised (CELF-R) (Semel, Wiig, & Secord, 1987). The subjects were predominately nonwhite, male, and from lower socioeconomic, inner-city families in the North Central region of the United States. The results of this research appear in detail elsewhere (Miniutti, in press).

To assess behavioral problems in the LD, BD and NA groups, classroom teachers completed on each child a Behavioral Evaluation Scale (BES) (McCarney, Leigh & Cornbleet, 1983). The BES is a teacher rating instrument used for screening, evaluating, or charting the progress of students in grades K through 12 who are suspected of being behaviorally disordered.

Achievement levels of the three groups were evaluated on the mathematics, reading recognition, and reading comprehension subtests on the Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT) (Dunn & Markwardt, 1979). The standard scores for the NA group on the three subtests ranged from 92.4 to 94.8, the BD group from 78.9 to 88.2, and the LD group from 75.6 to 83.6. For each group, the mathematics subtest was the lowest standard score.

The language skills of the LD, BD, and NA groups were compared on the CELF-R language total and six of the CELF-R subtests. The NA group scored significantly higher than the LD and BD groups on the language total and all six subtests, but no significant differences on the language total or any of the six subtests were found between the LD and BD groups.

Following the analysis, the special education groups were subgrouped into those with language problems (more than two standard deviations below the norm) and those without language problems. Eighty-nine percent of the

LD children and 81 percent of the BD children fell into the subgroup with language problems. The BES indicated that the children with language problems had significantly more serious behavioral problems than the NA group, but there were no significant behavioral difference between the special education children without language problems and the NA group.

On close examination of the BES subtests, it was clear that inappropriate behaviors (acting out kinds of behaviors) were the hallmark characteristics of the special education children with language problems. These behaviors such as truancy, lying, stealing, and destroying property are similar to the diagnostic criteria for conduct disorders outline in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Revised (DSM-III-R) (American Psychiatric Association, 1987).

On the CELF-R, forming complex oral sentences proved to be statistically more difficult for the special education students with language problems than any other language task. Given a word and asked to form a sentence, large numbers of these youngsters simply could not respond.

The 1988 Annual Report to the Congress on Implementation of the Education of the Handicapped Act (USOE, 1988) reported that approximately 85 percent of LD and BD children are not receiving services from a speech and language clinician. Following are four suggestions for reassessing services to these two at-risk groups.

First, increase amounts of speech and language services provided to these groups. Children with serious language problems need and are by federal law entitled to the direct services of a speech and language clinician.

Secondly, special education teachers should use one of the many commercial oral language programs in the classroom daily. Classroom teachers do not have the time or experience to be writing oral language programs. Using a commercial language program such as DISTAR (Engelmann & Osborn, 1970) or the Peabody Language Development Kit (Dunn & Smith, 1966) does not mean language cannot also be emphasized throughout the day. Targeting oral language development in all classroom activities is important.

Third, children should be given many opportunities to develop oral language skills throughout the school day. Lessons should be designed with the idea that children have to talk to their peers and the adults in their environment in order to increase their vocabulary and advance their fluency. This necessitates more active participation on the part of the students and less lecturing on the part of teachers.

Last and perhaps the most important, teachers need to avoid behavior management system that are so stifling as to keep the child in virtual language isolation throughout the day. Behavior management systems that penalize children for interaction with adults and children in the classroom may control the class while seriously damaging language development. Behavior management systems that encourage "talking the problem through" like life-space interview (Wood & Long, 1990) provide opportunities to develop language skills.

To help at-risk children with communication disorders develop better oral language skills will not be an easy task, but most worthwhile educational endeavors are not. If we are to help these children with communication disorders to become productive adults, we must give them every opportunity we can to develop their oral language skills in our schools.

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Diamonds for Teens

Carla Crutsinger

If we look at some of the trends in the life of today's teenager, it is apparent that intervention and education are necessary to secure a better future. Dr. Peter Scales, executive director of The Anchorage Center for Families (Alaska), reported the following statistics in 1988:

- Every 31 seconds, a teenager becomes pregnant.
- Every 2 minutes, a teen gives birth.
- Every 78 seconds, an adolescent attempts suicide.
- Every 20 minutes an adolescent is killed in an accident.
- Every 1-1/2 hours, roughly, one teen is murdered and another commits suicide.
- At present rates, 40 percent of today's teens will be pregnant—the U.S. has the highest teen pregnancy and abortion rates in the developed world.
- By age 18, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 10 boys are sexually abused.
- By age 18, 1 in 8 teens will run away from home at least once.
- Using 1988 statistics, it is projected that by 1991 there will be more AIDS deaths each year than traffic deaths.
- One million teens drop out of high school each year. Depending on where they live, that drop out rate is between 25 percent and 80 percent.

Most problems that adolescents encounter, do not occur in isolation. For teenagers falling into one category, there is a high probability of falling into another. These problems penetrate all social strata, economic levels, and geographic locations. The keys to unlocking solutions lie in the roles of the family and the educational system. "Diamonds for Teens" is one such key.

"Diamonds for Teens" is a peer-assistance/leadership training program aimed at middle school and high school students. Its focus is selecting and training a class of potential leaders to work with at-risk peers. These potential leaders, "diamonds in the rough," can be found in all areas represented within the school: cheerleaders, athletics, academics, the arts, music, dramatics, special interest groups such as ropers/skaters, and also recovering alcoholics and drug addicts.

In Texas, this peer helping class can address two mandated programs: at-risk and gifted and talented. By selecting talented leaders and training them to help meet the needs of the at-risk population, schools are able to offer a cost-effective program. In September, 1990, 67 Texas districts, in fact, were receiving graduation credit at the high school level for peer assistance classes.

Participation in the class is determined primarily by recommendations from administrators, teachers, counselors, and other students. An interview conducted by a preappointed group furthers the selection process. It is advisable that prior to the final cut, awareness training and role-playing situations are practiced to determine which students are emotionally equipped to handle working with at-risk students. Some characteristics of an ideal Peer Assistance Student include: good self-esteem, comfortable being honest with others, willingness to listen, non-judgmental attitude, genuine human and caring demeanor, openness in sharing feelings, a good understanding of a value system, the ability to make wise decisions. It should be noted that not all students will possess each of these attributes; therefore, selection of peer helpers must be done carefully. The selection process is designed to discover "diamonds in the rough" or those with leadership potential.

Once the final cut has been made, the class begins an intensive training program using the text, *Teenage Connection* by Carla Crutsinger, for six to eight weeks before being assigned special projects with at-risk students. The training itself is composed of activities which teach cooperative communication exercises in three major areas: self-awareness, verbal and non-verbals social interaction skills, and problem solving. All the materials include open-ended questions in which the students are trained to ask and/or answer.

During the first set of awareness exercises, the students are introduced to a questioning model, which promotes critical listening and thinking in the areas of social and emotional growth. At this introductory point, the focus is on beliefs and values. Before a student is ready to move forward in training, he must feel comfortable verbalizing his opinions in a trusting environment.

In these awareness exercises, the student must be taught to be both an active listener and a successful respondent. As listeners, students are taught how to process information and ask meaningful and relevant follow-up questions in order to learn more about an individual. Part of the role of an active listener is to give appropriate feedback to the person speaking. Without feedback, the speaker does not know how his message is being received. This reflection process gives the speaker a chance to make adjustments just as an individual might change his appearance when he sees himself in the mirror.

When the speaker is being asked to organize his thoughts according to his value system, he will feel more free to express his feelings and opinions in a non-threatening environment. A perfect example is when an individual is asked to consider changing any of his prejudices, biases, or misconceptions. Only experiences that lead to self-discovery make it possible for changes like these to occur. The Teenage Connection text encourages this self-discovery process by encouraging the speaker to explain his answers and consider issues from all perspectives. If the student can explain his answer in a confident manner and support his reasoning with real life experiences, he is secure in his thinking and will probably make a good leader. The person who cannot explain why he makes choices needs to spend more time on awareness training.

The next phase of training centers around verbal and non-verbal social interaction skills.

Students participate in activities which isolate specific communication attributes such as "Tone of Voice" and "Body Language." Critical questioning exercises follow each activity. This process enables the students to discover any areas of need and also provides tools to correct any problems. Without feeling threatened or defensive, these guided questions provide the opportunity to draw conclusions about themselves. Becoming aware of a problem is the first step in correcting it.

The "Brainworks Questioning Model for Social and Emotional Growth" is an integral part of the entire program and consists of five hierarchal levels of questioning. The levels range from general inquiry to summary and concluding statements. Each subsequent level required more complex and abstract skills. In brief, the levels consist of the following:

1. General Questions
2. Specific Questions
3. Contrast/Expansion Questions
4. Summary Awareness Questions
5. Concluding Statements (Synthesis of Information)

The final phase of training targets problem solving. This section introduces imagery and role playing as tools to practice a myriad of teenage situations requiring decision making. For example, the student may be provided with a situation such as the following.

Skipping School

Problem: You are talking to a 16-year-old boy who is skipping a certain class because he does not like the teacher. The teacher talks too much and will not answer the questions.

Task: How can you convince the student his solution is not solving the problem? Use the Brianworks Questioning Model to write questions you could ask that might guide this student into thinking about alternative solutions to his problem.

General Questions (Non-Threatening):
Example Question:
1. Describe Ms. _____'s class. How does she treat other students?
2. When you say Ms. ________ talks too much, what do you mean?
3. ______________________________

Specific Questions ("You" questions that include feelings, thoughts, actions):
Example Question:
1. What does the teacher do that upsets you the most?
2. How do you feel when she does not answer your questions?
3. ______________________________

Contrast/Expansion Questions (Alternatives, Choices):
Example Question:
1. What do you think your teacher thinks about your skipping?
2. Do you want to pass this class? What would happen if you failed it?
3. ______________________________

Summary Awareness Questions (Possible Solutions):
Example Question:
1. What are your choices?
2. Is skipping getting you what you really want?
3. ______________________________

By using the "Brainworks Questioning Model," the peer trainees can work their way through this situation. These problem-solving exercises teach the peer helper how to ask at-risk students questions which will guide them into being able to solve their own personal crisis. If the at-risk student can learn alternatives to problematic situations, he/she will be able to incorporate these skills into all life situations.

The end product is a trained peer helper who has obtained the necessary tools to help the at-risk student. A prepared peer assistant is now able to discover hidden feelings beneath spoken words. He will understand the importance of honesty in communication and will be able to butt through feelings of anger, find its source, and address it without spurring feelings of intimidation. A successful peer helper will realize the necessity to interpret verbal and non-verbal messages objectively. Most importantly, a peer assistant will realize that alternative plans are a key factor to being a successful problem solver. With this type of training, these potential leaders, these "diamonds in the rough," have been polished to a "sparkler" ready to service their at-risk peers. They, in turn, are trained to seek "diamonds in the rough" among their targeted at-risk population.

When A Fellow Student Dies: How Do You Handle It? The Concept of At-Risk Students Takes On A Whole New Meaning When It Happens On Campus

John H. McRae

The purpose of this article is to inform readers of the strategies for helping their student population deal with the death of a student either from an accident (while at school or away) or from natural causes. Death has come to school with statistics that show in one school day every 36 minutes a child is killed or injured with a gun (*Time*, October 8, 1990.) In addition, there is the out-of-school time with its rising death rate of students (of all ages) from gang wars, drive-by shootings and automobile accidents, as well as the increase among teenagers of AIDS and other "killer" diseases. All of this makes this topic of dealing with death a necessity for teachers, counselors, and administrators in order for them to be mentally prepared for what can be a nightmare experience. Fear of death, the unknown about losing a friend, and ideas such as "The boogyman will get me," and "Only the good die young, so why wasn't it me?" all play a part in turning an Un-At-Risk Student into a Student At-Risk.

I am sure the principals who have dealt with drive-by shootings, AIDS, cystic fibrosis (CF) and other fatal diseases as well as car accidents all have said, "It will never happen to me; I don't have that type of school." Well, it can happen at any school and you'd better be prepared because there is NO WARNING!

Death on your campus — What do you do first?

When a student dies on your campus a series of events must interplay each other in such a way that they all happen at the same time. First, of course, contact the Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) or medical crew and then send someone to the family in person. A person whom the parents know will be able to help and comfort the parents better than the principal. Locate the child's minister, rabbi or priest to meet the parents at the home, office or hospital.

At the same time call the superintendent's office, then the school board's lawyers, and the local insurance representative. Demand to be put through at once then briefly describe what has happened and for them to come to the school as soon as possible.

The third simultaneous call should be to the police, unless, of course, it is not best to do that first because "news hounds" pick up the call and you need to have everyone: superintendent, lawyers and insurance people, briefed before the media arrive. Most importantly, you don't want parents to hear of a death at your school before you are completely prepared to deal with them and the situation.

Getting the principal, staff and students ready to deal with their grief

Have teachers and other staff members call the parents whose children saw the accident happen. Explain exactly what has happened and suggest they come and be with their children if at all possible.

The rest of the school should receive a written explanation stating exactly what has happened, what you have done and are going to do. Parents will start to arrive to check on their children (word having gotten out through the calls to the hospital, police, etc.) and answers have to be given . . . And the principal is the one who is expected to give them and to set the tone that school will follow.

The faculty at Christa McAuliffe's school used one of the best methods of helping students deal with grief. After watching their teacher's space craft, The Challenger, explode in front of them on television the teachers and staff called in professional counselors to help the students.

Counselors, child therapists, and social workers are all trained in helping students deal with death and grief, and a volunteer team should be organized and at the school that day to work with the faculty and students.

It is also important to get input and feedback from teachers in the school itself and encourage them to work closely with the counselors. The teachers know the students and the counselors know their trade: they both need each other!

Finally, draft a letter to all the parents on what exactly happened and how the school will try to handle the tragedy.

Basic steps to follow the next day

1. Have the counselors meet with the teachers whose students were personally involved and prepare them for what they might expect the following day.

2. Make school optional the following day for students but let the parents know what the counselors will be doing. All staff must be there to give support and to make things as normal as possible.

3. Set up counseling time for the faculty too. They must have a chance to express their grief also.

4. Cancel all extra-curricular activities for the coming weekend.

5. Continue to monitor the situation daily until you believe students and teachers are "comfortable."

6. Realize after experiencing death first-hand things will never be the same.

Each case and reason for a child's death is different and should be treated by teachers, counselors and psychologists differently. But the important thing is to have your resources available to deal with whatever may lie ahead.

Off-Campus death does affect on-campus life. How do you handle it?

1. Be prepared! Have a list of psychologists, psychiatrists and counselors you can call on. You may need more than what your school system has available.

2. First and foremost, don't be afraid to let your staff and students see that you are human and are affected emotionally. Crying is as human as laughing.

3. Get your staff together as soon as you know enough to give accurate details of what happened (i.e. type of illness, accident, etc.) Facts are so important at times like these and rumors or half-truths will come back to you.

4. Tell the teachers to answer any and all questions with truthful answers. If the students want to discuss what happened then the teacher should lead the discussion so as to avoid getting away from the truth. Other things that could and should be talked about are the good things the student did, how he or she will be missed, how his parents might feel.

5. Showing grief and crying should not be laughed at. Teachers must let the students release their grief, but should be aware of those who are either "stonewalling" or overly emotional — that is, when the professional should be called in either for group or private counseling.

6. Try to avoid making comment like "God takes all the GOOD children first" which can result in thinking "Am I BAD because God didn't take me?" Try to redirect the students from thinking "Will it happen to me tomorrow?" "Is there a Boogie Man?" "Can we all catch it?" This can lead to misunderstanding and fear.

7. Compassionate Friends, a self-help group of parents who have had children die, offers very good material for parents to use. The school and public library should have books on a variety of reading levels to help children deal with death.

8. Religion affects us whether the Supreme Court wants it to or not. If asked where the child is right now, I believe the teacher should take their cue from the family's religion. If they are Christians, then they believe in Heaven and Heaven is where the child is. If the child was of a religion that the class as a whole is not familiar with, ask someone from that religion to come in to talk with the class. Children who show a real concern in this area should have their parents contacted by the teacher to make them aware of their child's concerns.

9. Art work, essays, poems are other ways to help the students express themselves.

10. A letter to the parents with the facts about what has happened, what the school is doing, printed materials and book list that might help the parents deal with the tragedy at home (available in the school office) and what funeral or memorial service arrangements have been made, should be sent home.

11. Encourage students and staff who want to go to the funeral or memorial service to go. Again, help the students and staff release their grief.

12. Parents and friends will begin asking what they could do to keep the child's memory alive, and there are many different types of memorials that could be given to the school. Library books, landscaping, any type of academic or athletic equipment or awards are few to consider. Be sure that the person giving the donation is thanked by the school and the parents or family are notified by the school of the gift.

13. Plan some type of schoolwide memorial service for students, parents and staff. In order to have a religious type program and to assure that only those who really want to attend do, an afterschool program is best. By all means check with the child's parents to see what they want. Something as simple as a tree planting or the dedication of new playground equipment can be meaningful. This would also be a good time to mention other donations that have been received. This could be done several weeks after the funeral itself. (If the child's parents are not up to attending, a videotape of the ceremony could be made and presented to them.)

14. Academic and extracurricular activities of the school must resume as soon as respectfully proper. One week of mourning shows the needed respect, but this depends on the type of tragedy your school is dealing with. (from *Death Comes to School, Executive Educator, March 1991).*

Keeping the memory alive

Whether death of a child, a close friend or relative, people want to keep that person's memory alive. Materials, books, equipment, etc., that were part of that persons life become a cherished relic of someone no longer with us physically. Whatever legally can be given to the family should be. A soccer ball used in last week's game may be overlooked, but to a grieving parent it is a part of that child's life that lives on. They need that more than school does! Make every effort to inform the parents of what their child's class is doing. Even though their child is not physically part of that group any more there are many emotional ties to classmates and events that will help the parents in their grief process.

The Adult Learner At Risk

L. Jayne Goldstein

What is an At-Risk Student?

At-risk students are students who come to a community college with diverse needs and value systems that are not completely served by the traditional teaching methods. At-risk students are often minority, first generation, low-income, from disadvantaged families, almost always have a job, often have low academic skills, and have less chance of getting through the system. At-risk students have work and financial aid problems, are economically driven, and want to be employable.

Unfortunately, most descriptions of at-risk students too often ignore the fastest growing population of at-risk students in the community colleges today; the adult student. The adult learner, the reentry student and the lifelong learner (also referred to as the older adult or nontraditional student) are terms that are often used synonymously and interchangeably. Although generally the characteristic of these are the same; there are some unique differences that will be defined and addressed in this presentation.

This presentation will provide a general overview of the adult/lifelong learner and present specific information on a variety of issues. The following is a brief outline of the topic.

A. Profile of the Adult/Lifelong Learner

B. How the Adult Learner Differs in the Characteristics from Adolescent Learners.

C. How Adult Learners Learn and What They Want To Learn
  1. Faculty teaching strategies:
    a. Appropriate instructional materials and presentations
    b. Curriculum
    c. Technology

D. Patterns of Adult Learning and Development

E. Barriers for the Adult Learner
  1. Personal
  2. Situational
  3. Institutional

F. Special Student Services for Adult Learners, i.e.
  1. Re-careering
  2. Counseling Issues
  3. Use of Technology

G. Special Issues, i.e.
  1. Women As Students
  2. Evening Students
  3. Part-time Faculty

H. Special Populations, i.e.
  1. Corporate
  2. Prison

I. Future Trends, i.e.
  1. Educational practices-curriculum
  2. Changes in appropriate entrance requests
  3. Non-traditional scheduling

J. Resources and Publications

Information and strategies to be presented have been collected and successfully used for the past ten years by faculty, administrators and staff at Rio Salado Community College. Rio Salado is the non-campus college of the Maricopa Community College District, the second largest community college district in the nation. Rio Salado is the third largest of the 10 colleges in the Maricopa District. This college is nationally known for its innovative programs and unique approaches to teaching and learning. The college is recognized for its extensive use of technology, its partnership with industry and alternative delivery instruction.

Rio Salado Community College has an enrollment of over 16,000 students per semester, 75 percent of the students are part-time (3 credits or less), 65 percent attend evening classes, 52 percent are women and the average student is 36 years old. Ninety-seven percent of the faculty are part-time.

Section Two

Preventing and Reducing Incidents of Students At Risk

Can anything be done to resolve those factors associated with the crisis of youth at risk? Part of the answer depends upon matters of political will, about which many of the following articles have little to say. Part of the answer depends upon whether a sufficient knowledge base exists to redress individual problems, along with the resources to implement solutions.

Current understandings and basic knowledge about the problems associated with at-riskness is becoming extensive. Research in the area is likewise becoming firmly grounded. Therefore, the primary issue is not one essentially based on resources, but one of better use of existing resources.

The issue is one of regearing and redirecting the practices of institutions — primarily the schools. This will be a massive task, but it is unacceptable to conclude that it is an impossible task. If those who set policy, manage, and teach in our schools can identify a clear fix on where they should be going, the task is do-able. Let me be clear that there are no magic bullets, no quick fixes, and no panaceas. The problems we have been describing will be with us in some form for a long, long time. More importantly, we must do a better job than we are currently doing.

At what point are we, and what can we do now? Research tells us a number of factors that are important at all levels of schooling. Early childhood education pays off, modestly but significantly. Programs like "Follow Through," which were designed to build on the gains of Head Start, pay off, almost regardless of the approach used, because the focus is on the learning needs of disadvantaged children throughout the school program. Time on task is important; parent involvement is important; effective school leadership — defined primarily as involvement of teachers as professionals in setting and monitoring the achievement of shared educational objectives for the school — is important. If all these lessons are taken seriously and made a focal point of an elementary school's curriculum, there might be a significantly smaller number of secondary at-risk students.

The plan is sketchy at this time, but the literature suggests that some such restructuring holds promise, and it clearly represents a challenge. In sum the challenges are:

a) A challenge to schools to rethink and restructure the educational program offered the students they can best identify: students vocationally at risk.

b) A challenge to the business community to provide the opportunity for work experience which is one key part of the solution.

c) A challenge to city and community agencies to join with the schools in a coordinated approach to the needs of at-risk youth.

If we can begin to meet these challenges we will take a giant step forward. The following articles give some feasible steps as a beginning for us.

ALLY PAC

A-chieve a-LL Y-our P-otential A-cademic C-apacity: Strategies and Programs for Involving At-Risk Youth

Sandra J. McNeal

Current research suggests a strong correlation between low self-esteem, poor academic success and the at-risk youth.

The writer has created, implemented, and evaluated a behavior modification strategy targeted specifically for at-risk youth. This strategy has proven to be effective. Through the uses of positive reinforcement in a planned study skills program the students improved academic success in school. More importantly however, the students, and their parents, improved their attitudes about themselves and school.

The program can be adapted for use with preschool through high school aged, at-risk youth. The specific goals may also be adapted. Suggested goals might vary from: 1. increased test performance, 2. content retention, 3. skills achievement, and/or 4. appropriate classroom behavior management.

The program adopts a club mind set. The club utilizes the acronym ALLY PAC, which represents A-chieve a-LL P-otential A-cademic C-apacity. The key concept is that all students will achieve their full potential. The program consists of 45-minute sessions meeting twice a week at the end of the school day. (Sessions can be adjusted to be age appropriate.) Twenty students per club is recommended; based on a 1 to 10 ratio (teacher to student).

THE SEVEN PROGRAM DOMAINS

I. STUDENT MOTIVATION

reward system, non-threatening atmosphere.

II. STUDENT CONFIDENCE

recognition, awards, self-esteem focus.

III. TIME ON TASK SKILLS

time management exercises, self discipline

IV. STUDENT COACHING

test structure, distractors, practice, guessing techniques.

V. CRITICAL SKILLS STRATEGIES

inferential reasoning skills, cognitive thinking skills.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

noise reduction, relaxation strategies, snacks, proper lighting, work-space.

Each session is structured as follows:

Session Block - 45 minute period

Five minutes - affective/sharing time, nutritious snack, review

Ten minutes - math focus

Ten minutes - language arts focus

Ten minutes - test strategies/coaching/practice

Ten minutes - rewards/free time/motivational time

The evaluation process consists of quizzes administered each session and evaluated under teacher supervision. Evaluation records are carefully maintained on each students' mastery of each specific skill. Each student maintains a notebook of materials.

The central thesis of the program is that at-risk students have been conditioned to a failure/failure mentality. The focus of the program is to give the students an opportunity to succeed. The program is composed of six individual concepts — all working together to encourage success.

THE SIX PROGRAM CONCEPTS

1. Instant success—tokens (for correct response)
2. Reward/recognition system
3. Student Store (Bonus Bucks)
4. Free time
5. Certificates of Achievement
6. Praise and encouragement

The sense of belonging is fostered through the club membership concept. Members wear ALLY PAC visors and badges during the club meetings.

After each task is completed, or a correct response has been given, a small token is presented to the student. Three tokens are given for scores of 100 percent on papers (or any task). Each token is followed with verbal praise and reinforcement. Small tokens are traded for larger ones at the end of each session. The large tokens are called Bonus Bucks. Five small tokens equal one large token. Bonus Bucks are used to purchase items from the Student Store (A/P Exchange) or deposited into the Student Checkbook System.

Small Token = approximately one cent

Large Token = (Bonus Bucks) approximately five cents

Each student is given a checkbook. The system works just like an adult checkbook system. When students accumulate five Bonus Bucks ($.25), they open a checking account. Bonus Bucks are then deposited into their account, and the balance is updated as deposits are made or checks are written.

To purchase items from A/P Exchange, the students write checks made out to ALLY PAC for the appropriate number of Bonus Bucks. The amount is then deducted from the students' balances. The instructor initials each withdrawal or deposit.

As an added incentive, the concept of interest may be presented to students. Ten percent interest (10 percent) is suggested.

Interest is paid to students for achieving the following:

1. Arriving (to meetings) on time.
2. Attending each meeting—each session (perfect attendance).
3. Ten percent interest is paid on tokens saved each week (after two sessions).

For example: If the student accumulated twenty tokens the first week ($1.00), the concept of interest is introduced to the student. The student would receive one token as interest for the first week. Twenty-one tokens are credited to the students' account, and twenty-one tokens collected.

At the end of each meeting, the student cashes in the tokens earned, converts tokens to Bonus Bucks and a deposit is made to the account, initialed by the instructor. At the end of each week, interest is paid on the total balance of tokens.

Students have the opportunity to shop as part of the reward system. The store represents tangible proof of each student's reward for his/her efforts. The concept of the school store greatly affects each student's enthusiasm and performance. The store should include a wide variety of exciting and interesting items, chosen to appeal to the age group. (If space is limited — students could shop/place orders by catalog.) Materials can be purchased by a grant and/or donated by local businesses.

The last ten minutes of each meeting are designated as free time. Free time is an important tool in helping to build and maintain good rapport with students, motivating them to feel good about themselves and the club, and providing positive reinforcement for all.

Individual attention is given in several forms, including the following:

Certificates are used as positive motivational rewards designed to provide reinforcement for individual students. The reinforcement given to students rewards them for mastering a concept or skill, and is an excellent method of providing motivation.

A certificate is given each time students

1. Master a general concept or
2. Demonstrate extra effort/performance.

The certificate is presented by the instructor during the sessions and signed by the principal. It is recommended that the principal or assistant principal visit the club at least once to speak to the students as a motivational tool.

Personal praise and encouragement are the most important part of the program. It is praise and encouragement, consistently provided and genuinely felt, that accomplishes the greatest results with the majority of students. Praise should be given frequently and should always be sincere and specific.

Another Reason Why Johnny Can't Sit Still

Nancy O'Dell and Patricia Cook

Background/Introduction. The Symmetric Tonic Neck Reflex occurs naturally in the normal development of children; if this reflex stays at an immature level, it can greatly interfere with specific and general coordination tasks.

The Symmetric Tonic Neck Reflex (STNR) operates in response to the position of the head in relation to the body. When the head is tilted back, tension is increased in the muscles which straighten the elbows and those that bend the hips and knees. When the head is bent forward, the tension is increased in the muscles which bend the elbows and those which straighten the hips and knees. Essentially, the three body units — neck, arms, legs — are "tied together" by the reflex, so that the movement in one area automatically produces a change in the muscular tension in the other two areas.

In normal development, the STNR reaches its peak strength during the sixth to eighth month of the infant's life and should be appropriately diminished in strength by the time the child is two or three years of age. Retention of the STNR activity beyond the age of two or three at a level which modifies voluntary movement is considered to be immature and abnormal reflex development. It is felt that the educational implications of retained abnormal activity of the STNR can be quite complex and far-reaching. Its presence in the immature state controls the pattern of muscular tension in the child's arms and legs in relation to the head movements; movement of any one of the three involved body parts elicits the reflex response in the other two parts. These involuntary movements interfere with the child's gaining control over his body — that is, his body still controls him. All movements that the child makes must be performed within the constricting influence of the STNR.

The immature STNR generally hampers the production of rhythmic, coordinated movement and specifically interferes with the postures generally required for reading and writing. An immature STNR makes it very difficult for the child to sit in his desk in the "correct sitting position" with his elbows and hips bent at the same time. Under the influence of the reflex, the neck and elbows tend to bend together in opposition to the straightening, and vice versa. Consequently, when the child bends his arms to write or hold a book for reading, his legs tend to straighten. This is the child who frequently sits slouched down on his spine with his legs stretched out in front of him. This is considered by many teachers to be "bad for the spine," "lazy," or "hampering" to the child's work production. What many do not realize is that this position is actually a beneficial position to the child with the immature STNR because in this position his arms and head are not "fighting" with the position of his hips and legs.

When not allowed to sit in this slouched position, the STNR child may frequently become a "foot sitter," sitting in the chair with his feet and legs tucked under him in order to automatically keep the legs bent while he is concentrating on keeping the arms and neck bent for reading and writing purposes. Another favorite posture for this child may be to hook his feet around the legs of his chair, again to automatically hold them in position. It should be stressed here that the child does not know why he adopts these postures; he only knows that they seem to make him more comfortable.

Many children with the immature STNR will give evidence of hyperactivity because of the difficulty they have in sitting still for long periods of time in the "proper sitting position." They may get up and down from their chairs constantly in order to relieve the muscular tension caused by the reflex. These children also frequently have very poor penmanship, laboriously produced, with poor letter formation, and with the pencil held in a rigid and awkward manner. Every shift in the arm movement while writing also exerts a change in the muscular tension of the neck and hips. Consequently, these children generally write in a quite constricted, restricted, and cramped style and position to avoid muscular changes. Copying from the board to a paper on the desk is an especially difficult task as the child has to contend with positional changes in the neck and arm and the reflex effects of these changes.

Approximately 75 percent of the children with learning disabilities have an immature STNR as a contributory factor to their learning problems. This means, for many children who are failing spelling, their basic problem might be more a difficulty with writing than actually with spelling. Many of these children can pass a spelling test if they are allowed to do it orally rather than having to write the words. Also, children who are having trouble in arithmetic frequently experience more trouble and expenditure of energy in copying the problems from a book than actually having trouble with the mathematical concepts and computations. These children will often do the first part of their assignments correctly but then will either not finish the assignment or will just put any answer on the paper in order to hand in a "finished" product. As these children get older and have more and more failure experience, they avoid much, if not all, written work and often appear lazy and totally disinterested in their school work. Obviously, not all academic problems result from an immature STNR; however, many academic problems are compounded by this reflex's interference.

Another factor which commonly contributes to a child's difficulties with school work is that of ocular (eye) control. For many children, although their visual acuity or seeing ability is normal, their eye control is less than adequate. Poor eye control can significantly interfere with a child's being able to stay on the line he is reading, finding and keeping places on mix-and-match columns, finding this place when looking back and forth from the board to his paper, and doing much reading and paper work for a long period of time without experiencing eye fatigue and/or strain.

Exercises have been developed which are

very effective in helping to mature the STNR and to improve ocular control. These are intervention techniques which, if done properly, will actually eliminate these particular coordination problems. This exercise program usually requires from three to six months participation to produce the desired coordinations.

Beyond The School System: Keyville's Concerned Citizens Totally Involve Their Rural Community In a Model Approach For Reducing Youth At Risk

Emma Gresham, Jean DeVard-Kemp, Kay Gresham, Sheila Allen, Juanita Williams, Grady Sampson, and Jean S. Bowen.

Five years ago the small, rural community of Keysville, Georgia, was in a severe decline. With no industrial base and more than half of its adults functionally illiterate, the community appeared to be dying. For the previous generation, small community life had been an anchor, stabilizing the values of the young. But as the town had failed, many of its young people had lost all sense of "community." They were a high-risk group, dropping out of school and drifting toward life on the streets of nearby Augusta. Families were becoming fragmented. With no local school, there appeared to be nothing to sustain the community or its youth at risk.

In a remarkable manner, the citizens of Keysville, concerned primarily for their young people and led by their first black mayor have taken charge of their own future. Persuasive and articulate, Mayor Emma Gresham is a determined former special needs teacher whose approach to finding books for her community has been featured on PBS. She has organized community leaders into the Concerned Citizens of Keysville, a group that firmly believes that Keysville can be a good place for young people to live and raise their children, and that education is the key that will enable them to do so. This community has adapted the approach outlined by James Connor in *School Power*. Connor motivated faltering elementary school children through the active concern of every person they contacted during the day.

In a similar involvement model, the citizens and parents of this community are actively concerned and involved in every aspect of the lives of their young people. The community has re-incorporated and has secured a city hall that houses a newly-stocked library, a health center, adult literacy classes, and classes after school for young people at risk. Adjacent to the city hall is a large new ball field and a playground with shiny swings and slides. Social activities are frequent and bring together citizens of all ages. The community has plans for a laundromat and a new supermarket.

Keysville is counting on a multiple approach toward education that can raise the aspirations of its youth-at-risk by getting every generation in Keysville involved in learning. Since undereducated parents may not be able to or know how to check on their children's progress or to offer proper encouragement, the first facet of Keysville's thrust for education is its after-school tutorial program. This program offers school children a place to study with the necessary textbooks and instruction. Students are rewarded for their attendance and progress. Role models visit to talk with the children about the future, and there is a plan for a "career corner," where young people will be encouraged to examine options that they might pursue.

The volunteer tutorial program is led by Kay Gresham who holds a master's degree in social work. She encourages peer tutors. Students who have demonstrated knowledge in a specific subject area help others in that field. In this second year since its inception, enrollment is growing, and grades are being tracked to accumulate indicators of success. More than "book learning" is being absorbed; these youth-at risk feel the concern of the community. After their 20-mile bus ride from school every afternoon, they know that Kay Gresham and the volunteers are waiting to welcome them, to guide them in developing the manners of the business world, to support their school efforts, to listen to their concerns, and to talk with them about their options for the future. In this environment, social development is considered to be as important as cognitive development.

Keysville youth come home to people who care, and the caring is both intensive and visible. The Concerned Citizens of Keysville provide funds for rewards for the youth for attendance and achievement, including special trips. The leaders of Keysville have high expectations, and they make those expectations known. They want their youth to develop posi-tive self-concepts and to realize their potential, with the full support of their community. To that end, the Concerned Citizens organized the Junior Concerned Citizens of Keysville. All Keysville children of any age are invited to join and participate in activities planned to encourage them to become leaders. In addition, the Burke County Extension Agent comes to Keysville to involve its young people in 4-H activities that foster leadership development. Last year, a team of four Keysville students placed fourth out of 13 teams competing in a Burke County lamb judging competition.

The tutorial program is only the beginning of a typical day of learning in Keysville. Another component in Keysville's total involvement approach to reducing its numbers of youth at risk is literacy and educational growth for every capable adult. From 6-8 p.m., Monday and Wednesday, a group of 23 adults participate in literacy projects. With support from Georgia's Office of Adult Literacy through nearby Augusta Technical Institute, in classes coordinated by the Burke County adult education program, adults are going to school.

Teachers, carefully selected for their ability to relate to the needs of adults and for their success in public school teaching, instruct in four subject areas that will lead to high school equivalency degrees. At the same time, volunteers work with learners who need one-on-one assistance to master basic reading and writing skills.

The adult learning program will soon have its own classroom building. The Concerned Citizens are renovating a house into four classrooms that will have desks, blackboards, and two computers for computer-assisted instruction. Keysville will also receive televised instruction on a downlink system. Mayor Gresham and the Concerned Citizens want education to have a prominent place in their plan to make Keysville a good place to live and to learn.

A plan for parenting classes is underway as an additional way to break the inter–generational cycle of ignorance by teaching parents how to assist their children in learning. An office in the municipal building also serves as a local health center, so that basic health concerns of families can be met.

One of Keysville's goals is to become a literate community. As one of a few communities selected last year to launch Georgia's unique Certified Literate Community Program, Keysville is committed to changing its literacy status within the next 10 years from a majority who are functionally illiterate to a majority and more who are literate. Keysville is proud to be a participant in this initiative of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education. As a participant, the community is taking charge, through its Concerned Citizens, of paying a Certified Literate Community Program administrator who will organize recruiting, promotional and educational efforts to reach every citizen in Keysville in need of further education.

Keysville is a growing success story. As this story evolves, the adult citizens will be following the lives of their children and looking at the results of their efforts. Will this generation of Keysville youth stay in school? Develop pride in themselves that will be reflected in their own self-concepts and goals for the future? See more for themselves and their children than "a baby, welfare, and a trailer?" Recognize that a small community can continue to be a good place to live and raise their children? Indicators of success are only beginning to accumulate.

Involving the At-Risk Family — The Home/School Liaison Program

Susan Pilgrim

Chapter I, created by federal mandate, is designed to meet the educational needs of low-achieving students in the areas of math, reading, and higher order thinking skills. When planning the Chapter I application for 1990-1991, Rockdale County (Georgia) Public Schools made the decision to literally take the program services into the homes of Chapter I students. Previously used pull-out models were discontinued. Elementary students receiving Chapter I services were to remain in their regular classrooms with their peers; Chapter I supplemental services would be delivered in their classrooms, in their homes, in other designated locations before and after school hours, and during a Chapter I summer school. The position of Home/School Liaison was created to function as a dynamic resource to the classroom teacher, the student, and the family. Purposes of the Home/School Liaison Program are to get the school to and into the students' homes, to collaboratively work on the learning process, and to sensitize appropriate school personnel to a realistic assessment of and reaction to the students' home environments.

One Home/School Liaison is employed for each of the four eligible elementary schools. The liaisons were chosen based on their interpersonal skills and their philosophy of home involvement. Specific certification requirements for the position were deliberately avoided in order to allow for a large pool of applicants with the necessary attitude for this specific program. Their three primary responsibilities are to engage parents in the learning process, to assist in enabling students to learn, and to assist classroom teachers in helping students to learn.

Parent engagement involves regular home visits by the Home/School Liaison. The visits consist of supplying parents with instructional materials to use with students at home, supplying current information about the student's classroom progress, and obtaining current information about the students' actions and behavior at home. The liaison always functions as a realistic, dependable child advocate. Parent education groups with Megaskills curriculum are offered periodically along with childcare in the evenings. The primary focus of Megaskills is to develop skills within parents and enable parents to teach those skills to their children. The sessions promote the necessity and worth of the home in a child's education.

Enabling students' learning involves direct interaction between the student and the liaison as well as the collaboration between the parents and the liaison. All recent studies indicate that caring adults are critical components in all successful programs to reach children who are considered at risk. The liaison aims to cultivate a conducive learning environment for the student and calls upon any and all school, home, and community resources necessary to build that environment.

Assistance to classroom teachers involves initiating and facilitating home/school communication, modifying curriculum and/or academic expectations, and giving the teacher a non-judgmental and realistic description of the student's home environment. The liaison is an immeasurably valuable resource to the classroom teacher who is faced with educating a diverse group of students with a wide variety of learning blocks. By better understanding a child's life outside the school, a teacher is much better equipped to improve the child's life within the school.

Since the Home/School liaison Program and the position of liaison were new and without precedent, substantial staff development support was provided for the liaisons. The focus of the training was two-fold: (1) to provide the Liaisons with the skills and confidence they needed to carry out their new responsibilities and (2) to encourage the building principals, support personnel, and classroom teachers to support the program through acceptance, understanding, and promotion of the liaison's role.

Eight development sessions, led by a carefully-chosen consultant, addressed broad topics such as working with change, communicating effectively, and problem solving, as well as specific topics such as specific case management. Dealing with parents on their turf and trying to help teachers deal with students whose home situation is frequently beyond their understanding calls for skills not many teachers have developed. Staff development, in its truest sense, is critical to the success of this program. Topics were primarily determined by the liaisons themselves. In addition to consultant training, staff development activities include regular monthly team meetings exclusively for liaisons, regular meetings with the program director, formal Megaskills training in Washington, DC, attendance at various conferences, and a full-day orientation with representatives from agencies and organizations.

The Home/School Liaison Program is a solid example of how schools can forge a partnership with homes and the community. It represents an innovative way of using limited federal dollars to effectively supplement the school program. It recognizes the expertise of the classroom teacher by not pulling students from the room, and it acknowledges that schools, homes, and the community must collaborate to maximize the effects of education. When supported by a summer program developed to build self-esteem and boost academic achievement, the Home/School Liaison Program holds unlimited potential benefit for at-risk children and at-risk homes.

The process of change can not be rushed, and it is seldom without pain and frustration. The dramatic change in Rockdale County's Chapter I Program did not come easily or overnight. It is still, in fact, in its infancy, and questions without proven answers are still being asked. School board discussions, school-level meeting, and state department conferences were all part of the process of allowing a brand new idea to take form and replace a familiar model. In spite of the pitfalls and roadblocks, the change was made, and it will prove to be worth it all. The change was made with the students' needs as the one and only focus. The Home/School Liaison Program is meeting the needs of students at risk of school failure.

Dislocated Students At Risk

Donald R. Castle

A vital issue that goes beyond the devastation heaped on dislocated income earners in a family is the effects of dislocation on the children. They eventually suffer problems similar to those suffered by the adults in the family. When the money runs out, the children feel the loss not only physically, but psychologically as well. The impact on the children is greater in the school setting than anywhere else because in school the child's social environment is most concentrated. It is this concentration that places the dislocated child in a situation where he is seen with children who do not have his problems. The dislocated child tends not to dress as well, or does not participate in social activities. Also, the self-esteem of the dislocated child tends to suffer when the family locates to a less expensive dwelling. According to *Barriers to Excellence: Our Children at Risk*, children of dislocated workers are pushed into a poverty that causes an erosion of their entire being. The school setting hits dislocated students hardest when they are rejected by friends, grades deteriorate, and they are placed in classes for the academically lower students (*National Coalition).*

Since most dislocated workers are from middle income families, a 15 percent drop between 1978-1983 in the number of people in that category represents a significant impact on the educational system in the United States. The number of people classified as poor has risen 10 percent during the same period. Those people now living in poverty or near or below the budget line for a family of four is 40 percent of the population. As a result, millions of American children have little opportunity to grow and develop in order to better themselves. They fall into an identifiable set of behavioral patterns which prevail when poverty intrudes into their lives. These characteristics are singled out for criticism by educators because they do not fit the standard expected modes of behavior. Since acceptable patterns of behavior in schools are based on behavior practices that are found in stable middle class families, there is little understanding or tolerance for the different types of behavior of low-income children. The child burdened by the disadvantages of poverty has little awareness of what is happening. These children who become outcasts of school society often reattach themselves to groups or individuals that can provide them with some identity. These groups tend to consist of children who are academically unsuccessful and gain success through "acting out." Their negative behavior often becomes overt and tends to be violent. This behavior is an effort to compensate for the loss of self-esteem. In many cases the violence is subconsciously designed to receive recognition from adults at home. Teachers and school personnel expect students to be interested in learning, which is an unreal expectation for the low-income student while the student is living in a physical world (Caudill).

Unlike the child of chronic poverty who tends "to dwell in silence," the dislocated student who eventually becomes impoverished displays much more aggressive behavior than the child of chronic poverty. If the dislocated student behaves, it is out of fear of punishment, not logic or rationale. The dislocated student's lost reliance on logic and rationale occurs when he loses his perfectly stable, consistent life as a result of his family's unemployment.

For those children who are preschoolers when the deprivation of dislocation occurs, their entry into the school system is more typical of the characteristics of the chronically poor. Food, clothing, good health and nutrition, and affection are in short supply. The home is generally small and overcrowded. The child enters school not expecting much and with little to give. The child has preconceived unfavorable attitudes even before he begins (Brattman). A child coming from a home devastated by dislocation rarely has adequate models from which to pattern behavior leading to viable goals for success. The overall environment creates problems in learning because the home lacks the ingredients for support of early educational needs. Books, magazines, cultural experiences, travel, and communication necessary for the early development of abstract thought and educational values do not exist. There is little interplay with language in the dislocated child's home; thus the language that the child comes into contact with in the school is extremely difficult for him (Glaze). The language problem encountered by these children creates an immediate feeling of failure and not belonging. Children begin to wonder why their lives are different from other children, but also tend to accept their roles as students who are inferior.

The most critical outcomes of the impact of dislocation on students are absenteeism, truancy, and dropping out. A good deal of research indicates that students who have problems with attendance and completing an educational program do so for reasons that exist outside of school. These high-risk students are influenced by the necessity of earning income to help sustain their families and caring for younger siblings, subjecting them to suffering anxiety-related physical and psychological problems. Those dislocated students who tend to miss school in the earlier grades tend to make up the ranks of those who later leave school permanently (Sexton). The dropout rate for 1974-1985 shows the seriousness of the problem with a rise of 24.3 percent to 28.4 percent nationally. Some urban areas such as Cleveland, Detroit, and Philadelphia often experienced dropout rates over 50 percent for the same time period.

Dislocated students also tend to withdraw from one school and enroll in another school, often within the same district in the constant search for affordable, adequate housing. Unlike the chronically poor who do often stay in their homes, dislocated families search to find housing that provides a close proximity to the home they had before dislocation.

This constant shifting from school to school disrupts the sequence of learning and undermines the student's ability and security. The results of research show that low-income families generally attend school with other low-income families. As a result, problems of staying in school, attendance, and shifting schools are generally perceived as normal. The higher the poverty level, the higher the rate of unstable school attendance and retention. This condition becomes an accepted form of life in areas where housing clusters dictate the level of poverty. The families are doing what they have always done in order to survive. Poor schooling is a mere consequence of the need for immediate survival. The creation of housing clusters because of deindustrialized neighborhoods is a prime cause of the existence of schools with this large population of poor students.

Dislocated Students At Risk and the Curriculum

Deindustrialized communities undergo numerous changes when the effects of job loss are felt. The schools in the community feel the effects more slowly than other facets of the community, since the collective impact of the aftermath of deindustrialization may require several years before the full force is felt. For example, dislocated students do not suddenly appear in schools. These students experience slowly developing psychological and emotional changes. In time, the slowing down and closing of factories cause an increase in the number of dislocated students in the school system at such a gradual rate that the condition dislocation creates for the school system goes undetected at first. Truancy, attendance, reduction in enrollment, and discipline problems will increase to the point that they eventually become noticed as severe problems. Curriculum problems, however, tend to go undetected for much longer periods of time.

Unlike discipline or attendance problems, problems that involve curriculum are not as obvious, for the curriculum is not seen as a solution to the problem of dislocated students. Dislocated students are at risk because of economic hardships placed on them by their parents. These children have little concern for school work that appears to have little relationship with their problems. Ultimately, dislocated students will place themselves and society at risk unless school provides the necessary education for them to have a productive life. Deciding what education is suitable for dislocated students is difficult because their poor behavior tends to detract from their educational needs. Arguably, the behavioral problems caused by dislocated children reflect their inability to find meaning in learning that is expected of them by the schools. In essence, "acting out" simply is a way to success for these children. Discipline problems are symptomatic of a curriculum that likely places these children in negative settings where the condition of dislocation inhibits their success. Furthermore, schools must be progressive enough to realize that they can no longer risk educating only those students who find school a positive experience. The academic studies, general studies, vocational education, and traditional special education curriculum designs function well if students find meaning and purpose within their areas of study. However, dein–dustrialization presents a different perspective. With the emphasis for the future employment of students placed on education and training, labor jobs in factories will be almost non-existent in the near future. The socioeconomic background of students and the idea that labor jobs will not be available must not stand in the way of dislocated students acquiring education. Schools must get their message to their students.

The problem of the dislocated student not meeting educational requirements is a curriculum issue and not one of discipline. Frymier explains that children from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to be less enthusiastic about school because enthusiasm and motivation are directly linked to success in school and eventual success in work or a career. When a large number of dislocated youngsters attend a particular school, achievement levels drop significantly, due to the difficulty these students have in making a connection between school and success. Another factor noted by Frymier is that the dislocated student's self-concept suffers tremendously since he is no longer excited about the world or his place in it. The connection dislocated students make between success in the world and success in school simply does not exist in their view. They see themselves as having no place in the world. Frymier goes on to point out that as classroom performance drops, apathy, mundaneness, and lethargy dominate the dislocated behavior of the child.

As for the school system in a community where deindustrialization is the rule, most changes in curriculum are directed toward the educational problems created by the dislocation. Curriculum problems of this nature tend to be created because dislocated children dislike learning that takes place in school and are more concerned with themselves and their immediate needs. In contrast, youngsters who are excited about learning broaden their universe to include other people, long-range goals, and abstract, esthetic, theoretical concepts. A school with numerous dislocated children often creates appeasement curricula. "These children are viewed as objects which need to be controlled," according to Frymier. They value the immediate, the concrete, and the emotional.

Most often dislocated students attend general studies classes that use basic stimulus-response instruction. This is rarely the intention of the general studies program, but, due to the nature of the type of students enrolled, most learning activities are a continuous design for immediate satisfaction. Little progress is made in the taxonomy of learning to assimilation and application of learning. These lower level classes are further characterized by unmotivated teachers teaching uninspired youngsters using materials that have little significant content or relevance to the student's situation.

The socio-economic status of dislocated students accounts for the lack of interest in the learning material commonly used by many schools. The problem is that dislocated students are more concerned with survival. Materials that do not contribute to this survival receive little of their attention. Another problem is that teachers who are trained to work with students who have normal backgrounds tend not to be prepared to teach the dislocated, socioeconomically deprived students. These teachers have solid academic records which often make it more difficult for them to deal with the dislocated, unmotivated students. These types of teachers work better with students like themselves. Often, in a sense, dislocated students become a subculture with the school where they are expected to have limited academic success.

Further stress is placed on the traditional curriculum as the number of students classified as socioeconomically at risk increases along with the number of classes they dominate. In most traditional curriculum plans, the academic classes represent the pride of the school. In communities decimated by deindustrialization, most often the number of academic classes drops to the point where the lower level classes constitute the larger portion of the instructional program. The depletion of the academic core curriculum lowers the expectations of the entire school. Schools then tend to become preoccupied with the larger number of lower level students while neglecting the academic program (Elkins).

Low-achieving, socioeconomically dislocated students foster lower expectations from teachers who view them as incapable students. Studies show that teachers unknowingly behave differently with students assigned to low achieving groups. Although teacher behavioral differences are not overt, the evidence is in grouping and evaluation practices.

Low-achieving students are grouped together within a classroom while the high achievers are more likely to be scattered throughout the rooms. Low achievers are also given less time to respond before the teacher intercedes to assist with the correct response. Written materials are not as closely scrutinized, and the grades for their work are noticeably lower. Teacher comments toward the low-achieving students are often more negative than those directed toward the higher achieving pupils. The results are that low-achieving students yearning for success tend to speak out of turn, overact to teacher requests, and demand a great deal more managerial time from the teacher (Weinstein).

Low achievers are often relegated to precise decoding oral activities while high achievers are permitted to expand their responses while adding opinion and analysis. The higher students seem to have more fun and are given more time for oral activities. Low achievers are kept busy with simple, low-level tasks while high achievers work with the teacher (Elder).

However, as the low achievers, the category for most dislocated students, become more involved in learning activities, they create more stress for all who are involved with them. These students personify the environment from which they come. They bring the environment and all the problems and stress that are part of it into school. Teachers differentiate their behavior toward the dislocated student as a way of dealing with antisocial, non-cooperative behavior that is so much a part of this type of students' profile. Teachers also believe that their differentiation will change or modify student behavior so that the students will be more likely to involve themselves in learning in the acceptable way. Lower expectations for these students will be more likely to involve themselves in learning in the acceptable way. Lower expectations for these students are part of the strategy. Teachers sometimes feel that by placing fewer requirements on the students, he will at least acquire some learning. Research shows that lower expectations are generally minimal school requirements that students do not attempt to meet. Along with lower expectations, is the lowering of the value placed on learning. Students do not publicize their socioeconomic status intentionally for the sake of being differentiated by teachers. Yet teachers often carry the notion that the student is of inferior quality based on a number of cues. Of those cues, the dislocated students' language is the most common differentiation. When students become dislocated and go through the process of socioeconomic deprivation, they become different. As for their language, vocabulary loss is common, and vocabulary acquisition halts. Eventually, there is a reduction in the variety of words used in casual conversation. Often dislocated students will resort to using a few selected words and expressions as the basis for language. Other cues are social in nature. Appearance, mannerisms, and personal hygiene deteriorate. These overt codes represent a negative environment that symbolizes failure for dislocated students. Because of these codes, subtle biases are commonly displayed by teachers that require dislocated students to work much harder than other students to show that they know something. Dislocated students tend not to make the effort because stress factors of dislocation are too dominant for this to happen.

It is apparent that, as dislocated students swell the ranks of the socioeconomically deprived, apathy and non-involvement increase. This increase contributes to the negative educational impact on a school as reading levels fall along with most competencies that students need for success. The lack of competency shows up on report cards, achievement scores, and standardized testing. If students are not directly involved in the problem, the ripple effect does influence them. Ironically, as dislocated students' self-image suffers and the stress of dislocation inhibits normal development, the students choose that which will give them identity even though it is negative. In the case of dislocation, motivation is dependent on enhancement of the self. When this sense of self-worth is directly related to the ability to achieve, positive academic achievement occurs. When students see school as a threat to their self-worth, some are forced to choose apathy and noninvolvement.

Peer relationships develop as dislocated students migrate to other students who are in their situation. It is not uncommon for them to find relationships where they may acquire and maintain some semblance of the status they once enjoyed. This is dependent on the age of the student when dislocation disrupted his or her life. These new relationships generally create more problems for dislocated students than they had before. These low-achieving students then fall by the wayside as academic competition forces them further down the academic scale, often into failure. For example, a typical urban school in Chicago with a 40 percent level of students at risk or socioeconomically deprived reported 90 percent of this group with at least two failing grades. Failure, however, is a subjective term that may result from situations beyond student control. It is believed that apathy and noninvolvement emanating from the type of student profiled at risk because of low-socioeconomic status includes the dislocated student. It does not take long for a student to take the attitude that one cannot fail if one does not try. In other words, nothing is ventured and nothing is gained while a type of self-worth is preserved.

Curriculum suffers because it does not serve all the students. Perhaps the most important point as to why curriculum is affected by deindustrialization is that a direct link between a person's economic well-being and education exists. Students who show at least a high school diploma are likely to get a job. Those without a high school diploma are not only unlikely to get a job, but also are unlikely to leave their communities and likely to become a burden on the local economy, draining it of valuable resources (Raffini).

Typically those who fail to graduate are usually low-income students who lack basic reading, writing, and math skills. They also tend to come from homes where parents are indifferent to their children's education. Efforts at remediation for these students have not succeeded because, as Benjamin Bloom notes, talent is not as much of a factor in successful performance in school or in one's work or profession as hard work and persistence. These things cannot be remediated, according to Bloom.

The reaction to the lack of academic success by students promulgates itself in non–curricular and noninstructional ways by the dislocated student. As has been discussed, discipline problems, absenteeism, and student withdrawal and dropout comprise the external or acting-out reactions to the school situation. Clearly these problems are part of the reaction of dislocated students to a curriculum that fails to meet their needs. Furthermore these problems are most likely to be solved through curricular changes but not all students are going to be saved. Some fall into that category often referred to by business and industry as the "throw-away" society (Hodgkinson).

Conclusion

The sudden appearance and rapid increase of dislocated students in small industrial communities developed because heavy labor-oriented industry left the areas or reduced their employment levels. Automation through technological development has made the labor employee nearly obsolete. The traditional industrial labor-type industry production will eventually be nonexistent as the United States and the world move toward a highly technical, information, service economy. Employees will require thinking skills and decision-making ability.

The education and training system must address these kinds of demands in educating the youth of the United States. No longer can the nation afford to educate people in narrow, inflexible curricula that is designed to channel students into specific employment levels. Individuals must be provided with general and specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and approaches that are appropriate to the world of work. Schools cannot teach students based on antiquated bodies of knowledge that have little to do with the world of today. Programs must enhance employability and foster suitable career choices, assist in facilitating mid-career job changes and mobility as needed, and promote the ongoing upgrading of skills and career advancement throughout each individual's working life. The link between education and economic success must be clearly expressed to students beginning early in the educational process (*Consolidation*, 1984).

Linking must be done in an academic fashion where the teachers teach critical thinking and decision-making skills. The ultimate goal of educational institutions is to educate. If such education occurs, the school system will have gone far in eliminating the kinds of school situations resulting from dislocation by providing a wide range of career options for its students based on their education and training.

Whether a school system emphasizes classical learning, educational goals and objectives, or vocational-technical education career outcomes, academic learning must be the basis for the learning activities in that it is this basis that increases the number of options. Although particular careers and jobs may be the immediate goal for students, a balance must be struck between achieving these goals and increasing a student's career mobility and flexibility in the long term.

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Effective Strategies For At-Risk Students

Wynton H. Hadley and Richard T. Hadley

This workshop was designed to present reading and motivational strategies for teaching at-risk students. The need for providing strategies to motivate and teach students who are at risk is intensified by more than 750,000 school dropouts and another 750,000 functionally illiterate graduates (Peck and Catella, 1991). Changes in school curricula and teaching and teaching methodology are necessary to meet the educational, social, and psychological needs of students. Concomitantly, motivational strategies to provide optimum experiences for developing critical thinking skills must be implemented in regular and special classrooms. Because reading is the channel for providing learning experiences in all content areas, this presentation was designed to address current, effective reading strategies for enhancing critical thinking skills.

Additionally, a review of literature on critical reading revealed a new emphasis on the arts, creativity and critical thinking. Webster (1991) identified four characteristics of the creative process which included (1) music imagination, (2) model of the creative process, (3) measures of creative aptitude and (4) the observation of creative/critical thinking. Subsequently, this presentation described music and its role in motivating students to develop skills in language arts, mathematics and social studies.

The initial component of the presentation identified characteristics of students who are at risk. Activities focused upon strategies for motivating students to enhance their interest and knowledge in reading and other contents areas. Reading strategies to enhance learning were demonstrated included Question-Answers-Relationship (QAR); Anticipation Guide, Concept Squares, Request and K-W-L.

Question-Answer-Relationships (QAR) The strategy was conducted using a passage about New York City. Raphael (1982) suggested that children can be motivated to read if they actively participate in the reading process by responding to questions. Question-Answer-Relationship (QAR) provides opportunities for students to receive feedback from the reading experience. The first kind of question is called "right there." The answer is explicit in the text. In the "think and search" question, the answer is not explicitly stated. The students must infer the response to the question. The third type of question, "on my own," encourages students to form an evaluation or judgment about the reading selection, thus developing critical thinking skills.

Anticipation Guide

The Anticipation Guide serves to motivate students to predict the content of a reading passage. The instructor carefully reads the selection and prepares 4-5 statements. The students use the title of the selection and visual cues to anticipate what the paragraph is about or to agree or disagree with the statements. For example:

___1. Most people live in big cities like New York.
___2. It is better to live in a big city.
___3. Cities and towns are the same, only bigger.

After reading the passage, a discussion of students' responses is encouraged.

Concept Squares

Concept Squares are used to motivate students to learn new vocabulary. The concept "city" is enhanced when a square is designed to include one-word synonyms.

People
Example: 1. City Hotel
Museum

ReQuest (Reciprocal Questioning)

ReQuest motivates students to not only respond to the teacher's questions regarding a passage, but the students also ask questions of the teacher.

K-W-L (Know-Want to Know-Learn (Need to Learn)

Students are motivated to read by using schema or prior knowledge and by recalling what they already know about the topic, what they want to know and, after reading, what they may need to learn. This strategy encourages students to monitor their reading comprehension.

The strategies and teaching approaches: Anticipation, Guides, Concept Squares, ReQuest, and K-W-L are designed for students to interact with the reading passage. Thus, students are actively engaged in the reading process.

The music motivational strategies for improving comprehension in content areas were demonstrated. Students have always responded to music because they can participate physically and socially. Musical experiences that encourage students to become active and creative provide a greater stimuli for developing critical thinking skills.

Language Arts

Musical activities to develop language arts experiences in young children were presented. The workshop demonstrated ways for young children to make the shapes of letters with their bodies and arm movements while responding to music. Such letters as "c" can be indicated by the circle of the arm. The letter "u" can be made by raising both arms. The circling of the arms will give a picture of the letter "o", and holding another student's hand with the hands in a downward position will visualize the letter "m". Singing the phrase of a song will also enable students to become knowledgeable of certain letters. When the students sing a song that has a word which begins with an "i," they may respond by raising their hands.

Initial vowel "I"

Song: I'm a lit-tle In-di-an, In-di-an, In-di-an
I'm a lit-tle In-di-an, now I sit and sing.

Initial consonant "R"

Song:
Round and a-round,
Round and a-round,
Singing and dancing
As gay as a clown.

Round and a-round,
Round and a-round,
Soon we will dance
and sing all o'er town.

Participants were introduced to the "vowel sounds." The procedure began with the instructor writing long and short vowels on the chalkboard. A word list was indicated as follows:

a	a
can	$\overline{\text{cane}}$
pan	$\overline{\text{pane}}$
mat	$\overline{\text{mate}}$

The instructor can point to the words and symbols as the students sing to the tune, "Funny Puppy."

a is long and a is short

ā for cane and ā for can

ā for pane and ā for pan

ā is long and ā is short

Art

Colors can serve as an inspiration to children when singing. When color words occur in the songs, they can be described and color pictures can be displayed. Students can describe the colors of their coats, shoes, socks, dresses, etc. The song, "Woodpecker and Blue Jay," was demonstrated for workshop participants.

Mathematics

The workshop demonstrated how music can reinforce students' knowledge of mathematical concepts. One student beats the drum while other students count.

Drum beats:	x	x	x	x
Counts:	1	2	3	4

There are several songs that involve numbers that were demonstrated for students to count.

Song: "This Old Man"
This old man, he played one; he played nick-nack on his drum.
Nick-nack pad-dy whack, give a boy a bone. This old man came rolling home.

Verse 2
This old man, he played two, he played nick-nack on his shoe.

Verse 3
This old man, he played three. He played nick-nack on his knee.

Song: "The Three Rogues"
There was a-might-y King, there was a-mighty King, and he had three sons kicked out of bed, because they could not sing.
(Add four sons, etc.)

Song: "The Little Birds"
Two little birds went up a hill.
One name Jack and the other name Jill.
Fly away Jack. Fly away Jill.
Come back Jack. Come back Jill.

Social Studies

Music is called the universal language because man's experiences and emotions are expressed through the same musical notations. Joy, sorrows, love of country, loneliness, and humor are expressed through music.

Music about America and its people were identified through selections to enhance students' knowledge. *Indian Suite, No. 2* by McDowell; *Variations on Pop Goes the Weasel* by Caillet; *A Lincoln Portrait* by Copland; *Billy the Kid* by Copland; *Oklahoma* by Rodgers; *West Side Story* by Bernstein; *Stars and Stripes* by Sousa.

Reading and music can serve to enhance the critical thinking skills of students in all content areas including language arts, mathematics, art, and social studies.

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The Effects of School-Age Child Care on School Success of At-Risk Children

Mary V. Lambert

A growing number of children in America are left in self-care before and after school because of contributing factors such as increasing numbers of women in the work force, (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1985), the expanding numbers of single-parent households, (Packard, 1983), our transient society, and lack of adult caretakers. The children have been referred to as "latchkey kids" due to their being left alone to care for themselves. The changing nature of the home in today's society has necessitated that schools change their range of services to students and their families. One service that is growing among school systems is that of School-Age Child Care (SACC). Many schools across the United States have responded to this need for services by initiating SACC services (Zigler, 1988).

School personnel have been aware of the rising numbers of latchkey children. These leaders have some concerns that this arrangement may contribute to student's poor performance in school.

With the rise in numbers of SACC programs, school personnel are hopeful that these programs will impact the school success of such children. Studies of intervention programs are relatively few and just beginning to appear. Research conducted to date has not specifically isolated children at risk — those who have varying backgrounds which make it highly probable that they will drop out of school in their studies. Much of the research has been suggestive rather than conclusive.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of SACC on school success of at-risk children. It was hoped that research in this area could facilitate assessment of the relatively new intervention of SACC and its impact on students already considered at risk. This information could aid in consideration of better utilization of present school facilities and future funding of such intervention programs.

Review of Related Literature

Enrollment in child care agencies has continued to rise in past years (Sanchez, 1989). It is reported that in 1970 there were more than 700,000 children in day-care programs. The number increased to 2.3 million by 1986. Although these enrollments have risen, there remain many children who have inadequate supervision before and after school. According to a Census Bureau report in 1987, out of 28.9 million children ages five to thirteen, 550,000 had no adult supervision before school and 2.06 million had no adult supervision after school. (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1987). Sanchez (1989) also reported that there is an insufficient supply of high quality, affordable child care available today. Day-care centers may not always accept older children because of a lack of recreational facilities for them (Stroman and Duff, 1982). Day-care services may be too expensive, inconvenient and/or of poor quality (Garbarino, 1980; Weiss, 1979).

The range of quality child care varies from excellent to poor (Zigler, 1988). Although licensing procedures and state standards have risen to take care of these problems, some children still receive substandard care because of economics. Those who are wealthy can afford high quality care, but there are many who cannot. Those children who suffer most are those who have the least opportunities for normal development anyway. Poor quality care puts disadvantaged children who are already at risk in further oppressing conditions. Zigler (1988) stresses that "poor quality care damages children's development." (p. 12)

This broad social phenomena has promoted parents, schools, and the community to look toward solutions to their problems. School personnel have expressed concerns that the situation may affect the child's success in school. Some watchful consideration is being given to schools as care providers for children who need adult supervision after school. Studies conducted on the effects of SACC on children and their success in school are relatively few.

The current trends of the changing family, working mothers, and single-parent families have contributed to the increased need for quality child care. The rising numbers of children being left alone before and after school is reaching an alarming rate. Review of the literature confirms these facts. The varied conclusions as a result of past studies suggest that additional studies need to be conducted on latch-key children and provisions of care for them.

Statement of Hypothesis

Results are varied from research that self-care and adult-care are significantly different in their impact upon children in either setting. What is known, however, is that there are growing numbers of children left unattended before and after school and that many of those children are from single-parent families. Based on those realities, it is hypothesized that placement of at-risk students in SACC will show improved school success over those who are left in self-care.

METHOD

Population and Sample

Subjects for this study were selected from a population of at-risk students from an inner-city school in Johnson City, Tennessee. The school serves many children from low socio-economic backgrounds. The student population is culturally mixed, composed primarily of Caucasian students and Black-American students. The population was anticipated to contain approximately 120 students from grades one through five. The sample was 60 students from the population.

Children are considered at risk on the basis of poor attendance and by being at or below the fourth stanine in reading or math. This information was collected from permanent records which contain attendance records and stanine levels from achievement test scores.

Sampling Method

At the beginning of the 1990-1991 school year, a list of at-risk children was compiled. Permanent records were reviewed of those children who were enrolled in SACC and those children who were known to be latch-key children. This information was collected from administrators, teachers, and the guidance counselor. From that list two separate lists were compiled — one for children who are in a self-care arrangement and one for children enrolled in SACC. Thirty students were randomly selected from each list using a table of random numbers. These two final lists, latch-key and SACC, were the subjects for the study.

Research Design

A casual-comparative design was used to investigate the effect of SACC on school success of at-risk children. The levels of the independent variables were children enrolled in SACC and self-care — those children not enrolled in SACC. School success, as measured by multiple assessments, was the dependent variable. The two groups of children, those in self-care and those enrolled in SACC, were measured on the basis of their SACC academic achievement, school attendance, work/study habits, peer relationships, and adult-child relationships.

The research expectation was expressed in the hypothesis that placement of at-risk students in SACC will show improved school success over those who are left in self-care. Both groups of children were determined to be at risk on the basis of attendance records and stanine levels thereby creating appropriate matching which allowed for equality of the two groups.

Instrumentation

Multiple assessments were used to collect data for this study. These assessments included:

1. Academic Grades: Report card academic grades for the end of the school year '89-'90 and grades for the first and second six weeks of school were gathered for analysis. The Chi square test was used to compare group frequencies to see if certain grades occur more frequently in one group than another.

2. Conduct grades from report cards were gathered from the end of the '89-'90 school year and the first and second six-weeks of school. The Chi square test was used here as well.

3. Sociometric ratings were obtained from two standardized instruments, the Behavior Evaluation Scale and the Burks Behavior Rating Scale.

Data Collection Procedures

At the beginning of the 1990-1991 school year, a letter and a "Permission for Participation" form was mailed to all parents of the children who were selected for both groups — latch-key and SACC. The letter briefly explained the nature of the study and what would be expected of the parents — answering questions on a measurement instrument. Immediate return of the form was requested. The letters were mailed with a self-addressed, stamped envelope enclosed. Parents who came in to pick up children from SACC were asked to set aside some time at their convenience to answer questions. Parents of latch-key children were called on the phone or home visits would be made at their convenience.

At the beginning of the school year, report card academic grades, conduct grades, achievement test scores, and attendance records from the previous year were collected. Each child's report card grades were gathered at the end of the second six-week period. After the second six-weeks of school, sociometric ratings (described in instrumentation) were gathered from parents and teachers.

All of the children were tested on mastery of basis skills at their grade level. Information was collected from computer data as to the mastery of these skills by the end of the second six weeks.

Data Analysis Rationale and Procedures

Analysis of data in this type of study involved a variety of descriptive and inferential statistics. Description of the statistics was outlined by finding the mean to indicate the average performance of the groups on the variable of school success and the standard deviation to determine the spread of scores.

The t-test was used to see if there was a significant difference between the means of the two groups. The Chi-square test was used to compare group frequencies to see if an event occurred more frequently in one group than in another. To control for the variable of IQ an analysis of covariance was used to test the difference of the means between the two groups of children.

Results

Academic and conduct grades for SACC and latch-key children were obtained from school records for the previous and current school years.

The differences in the means between the two groups were tested using the analysis of covariance using twelve (12) as the covariate. There was a statistically significant difference showing in the means of previous and current academic grades, while controlling for IQ ($F=15.56, df=1, p<.05$ and $F=6.7888, df=1, p<.05$ respectively). There was no significant difference found in conduct grades (F=2.949, df=1, p>.05 and F=2.605, df=1, p>.05 respectively).

There was a significant difference found in the type of after-school care and TCAP achievement test scores after controlling for IQ (F=6.443, df=1, p<.05). There were no statistically significant differences found in attendance for the two groups (F=.504, df=1, p>.05 and F=1.574, df=1, p>.05 respectively).

The Burks Behavior Rating Scale (BBRS) and the Behavior Evaluation Scale (BES) were used to obtain scores from teachers and parents as to the peer and adult relationships of the children in both groups. Scores ranged from low to moderate to high significance in problems with relationships. The Chi-square test was used to measure frequencies of significance in interpersonal relationships. The results indicated no statistically significant relationships shown between peer relationships as measured by the BBRS and adult relationships as measured by the BES and SACC (x2=3.17, df=2, p>.05 and x2=3.33, df=2, p>.05 respectively).

Assuming correct recordkeeping and responses from teachers and parents, there were two areas of school success that were significantly different between SACC and latch-key children. Those were academic grades and TCAP achievement test scores. Finally, as a result of analysis, there was no significant relationship found between SACC and latch-key children and their conduct grades, attendance in school, or interpersonal relationships.

Discussion

This study proposed to determine whether or not at-risk children placed in an after-school child care program would show improved school success over those who are left in self-care. The results of this study indicated that at-risk children placed in SACC showed improved success in academic grades and achievement test scores over latch-key children. Other indicators of school success such as attendance, conduct grades, and interpersonal relationships were not significantly different between the two groups in the study.

There were varied conclusions found in past studies on SACC and latch-key children. This study found mixed results as far as variables that contribute to school success. The differences found to be significant, academic grades and achievement test scores, do contribute to overall school success.

A word of caution is appropriate. The students enrolled in SACC in the program under study may have had intervening variables that were not studied. There may have been some variables needing control which were not within our ability to control. The parents of the SACC children appeared to be more involved in the overall school program. They took advantage of the many other programs offered through the school such as parenting classes, G.E.D. classes, make-and-take workshops, the SACC volunteer program, attendance at P.T.A. meetings, and participation in the Affirmative Learning Focus Club for at-risk students.

Due to the fact that there are many uncontrollable variables, it would be difficult to prove without question that the hypotheses that at-risk children placed in SACC have improved school success over latch-key children. However, although further study is needed, the concept of after-school child care cannot harm or hinder the school success of children. It does provide a safe, enriching environment in which a child can participate and learn.

SACC programs seem to be on the rise. Administrators feel more and more that it is practical for the school facility to be utilized year round and to provide a needed, high quality, affordable service to the community. Further studies are needed in a variety of settings with controlled variables to determine the effects of SACC. It seems that long-range studies would be in order to determine if the dropout rate had been reduced for children determined to be at-risk in elementary school as a results of after-school care programs. Such a study could provide school systems with information which could lead to decisions to fund SACC programs in the future.

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Social Interaction Patterns of Normally Achieving and Academically At-Risk Young Children During Unstructured Periods

Kathryn A. Newman

Social interaction has been found to be an important component in the development of cognitive and social abilities in young children (Strain, Cooke & Apolloni, 1976; Strain & Kerr, 1981). Preschool children who interact more with their peers while using learning materials have demonstrated greater academic achievement than their non-interactive peers even two years later (Strain & Kerr, 1981). Children who are isolated from or rejected by their peers are at a higher risk for behavior disorders and interpersonal problems in later childhood and as adults (Strain, et.al., 1976; and Strain & Kerr, 1981). This rejection and isolation stems not only from the behaviors of peers and teachers, but also in part from observed behaviors of the child (Cartledge, Frew & Zaharias, 1985). Specifically, accepted and rejected children have been shown to be significantly different in such behaviors as entering a group, initiating social interactions, and responding to such initiations from others (Coie & Kupersmidt, 1983; Dodge, Coie & Brakke, 1982; Leiter, 1977; and Putallaz & Gottman, 1981). Research in special education has found that while mainstreaming is being achieved in the physical sense, it is not being achieved psychologically; that is, the children are in the regular classes, but are not always being integrated into the spirit of the class (Force, 1956; Gottlieb & Leyser, 1982; and Horne, 1982). In short, they are being isolated and rejected. Some of the isolation and rejection can be explained by the attitudes of teachers and peers. However, it has been found that exceptional children sometimes exhibit behaviors that do not lead to positive interactions. They often do not recognize the social cues that accompany interactions (Bryan, 1977; Gerber & Zinkgraf, 1982; and Pearl & Cosden, 1982). They may not initiate as many interactions (Arnold &

Tremblay, 1979). In addition, they may interact more with adults than with peers (Burstein, 1986). Even minimally handicapped children appear to display a concurrent social delay to an equal or greater degree than their overall developmental level would indicate (see Ispa & Matz, 1978, for example).

Therefore, this study investigated how children considered at risk for academic failure compare in their social skills to their more normally achieving counterparts. The rationale for examining the behaviors of academically at-risk children was that these children could eventually enter either regular or special education, and I wanted to see if differences in social behavior could provide more information on where a child is subsequently placed. One large urban area provides a yearlong intervention and readiness program for children demonstrating academic lags in selected Chapter I schools. Ideally, these children will enter a regular first grade. However, if at the end of the year, this group still appears different socially from their peers, they may still be at risk for later rejection or isolation. Conversely, if they behave in socially appropriate ways, especially in comparison to children considered for the program but not enrolled because of lack of space, this would demonstrate program impact.

Key Terms:

YOUNG CHILDREN: This term is used to mean children who are in kindergarten.

AT-RISK CHILDREN: This term refers to children in designated Chapter I schools, who, because of academic or social difficulties in early childhood programs, have been referred for special testing and placement. In addition to a referral, the child must score below the 35th percentile on the Metropolitan Readiness Test or the Test of Basic Experiences to be considered for placement by the team. If accepted, they spend one year in the Pupil Adjustment Program (PAP), an intensive readiness half-day program.

SOCIAL INTERACTION: The term is used to mean the process by which individuals engage in activities than include the awareness of, and response to, another individual.

SOCIAL COMPETENCE: The term was defined as behaviors on the part of the targeted child and the child's social partner that reflect not only the effectiveness of the social encounters, but also the dynamic and reciprocal nature of the social interactions (Howes, 1987).

UNSTRUCTURED PERIODS: This term refers to any child-directed activities which are also called "free play." The setting of the social encounter, the materials used, and the number of children involved can vary.

Hypotheses

Six general hypotheses were generated. First, that subjects in the PAP at-risk group would exhibit less positive social initiations to peers than their normal peers, but more than the untreated at-risk group. Second, that subjects in the PAP at-risk group would exhibit lower levels of social play than their normal peers, but higher levels when compared to the untreated group. Third, it was expected that subjects in the PAP at-risk group would experience more intervals of adult mediations and adult play than their normal peers, but fewer intervals than the untreated at-risk group. Fourth, it was expected that subjects in the PAP at-risk group would ignore, reject, or respond aggressively to the initiations of peers more often than their normal peers, but less often than the untreated at-risk group. Fifth, it was predicted that there would be significant differences in the behavior styles of the PAP at-risk group across the settings of readiness class versus the regular kindergarten. Sixth, it was predicted that there would be significant differences in the numbers of intervals of social conversation across the groups of children.

Method

The sample consisted of 30 boys equally divided into three categories:

At risk in a program: boys who have been tested and diagnosed as being at-risk for academic and social difficulty and have therefore been placed in an intensive readiness program, the Pupil Adjustment Program (PAP). To qualify, the child must have been referred for testing by a teacher, administrator, or parent — usually following difficulties in an Early Childhood Program. Next, the child must be attending a designated Chapter I school. Finally, the child must score lower than the 35th percentile on the Metropolitan Readiness Test or the Test of Basic Experiences, among other measures.

At risk but not enrolled in the readiness program: children who have been referred for admission to the PAP program and have met the criteria, but were not enrolled due to lack of space.

Children not considered at risk: children attending the same school but who appear to be achieving normally. These are boys who are currently attending the same designated Chapter I schools but who have mastered at least 53/75 items on the Classroom Assessment (a criterion-referenced measure of developmental and academic skills), and are therefore not considered at risk.

The independent variable was the level of risk of the child. The dependent variables were categorized as positive social initiations to peers, responses to the social bids from peers, the levels of social play and social pretend play, the amount of social conversation, and the amount and levels of adult interaction. All of the subjects were measured with the behavioral observation sheet developed by Howes, Galuzzo and Meyers in 1986. Observers, blind to the group identity of the children, observed and recorded the subjects' behaviors every 15 seconds for four 5-minute segments. The children in the normal control and the untreated at-risk groups were coded for a total of 20 minutes, and the PAP at-risk children coded for a total of 40 minutes (allowing for the two settings of half-day readiness and half-day kindergarten).

Because of the small sample, it was decided that Analysis of Variance would be the most useful statistical procedure for determining the differences between the three groups of boys, despite its limitations. In addition, dependent t-tests were performed to determine the significance of differences in behaviors of the boys in the readiness program across their two academic settings. Finally a correlation matrix was created to determine the strength of the relationships between the variables.

Results

The results indicated that those boys in the readiness program were not statistically different from their normally achieving peers in the amounts of social conversation and general levels of social play. In addition, there were significant differences in the amounts of adult control given to the three groups. Furthermore, boys in the readiness program mastered significantly more skills on the Classroom Assessment than those boys who had been referred but not enrolled in the program. The three groups of boys were not significantly different in the areas of responses to the social bids of others, numbers of social bids received, or in the amount or level of adult interaction. Boys in the readiness program differed significantly across their two settings only in the areas of proportions of successful social initiations versus unsuccessful social initiations, and level of social play. The correlation matrix indicated that the total number of social bids received, and social conversation were positively correlated to positive responses to the social bids of peers. In addition, positive responses to social bids was positively correlated with the level of social play. Moreover, social conversation, total number of social bids received, number of positive responses to social bids and the level of social play were all positively correlated with the number of items mastered on the Classroom Assessment.

Discussion

The study was designed to determine if there were behavioral differences between boys enrolled in a readiness program for academically at-risk children and their normally academically achieving counterparts. The second control group was included to determine if possible similarities in behavioral styles could be attributed to program impact or to a lack of behavioral difference from the beginning. The results indicated that the boys in readiness classes generally looked similar to their academically achieving counterparts. Moreover, they differed from their referred but not enrolled peers in key areas.

It must be acknowledged that there are concerns about the research. These concerns will not only act as qualifiers, but they should help to shape future research efforts in this area. First, the observation periods should be lengthened, and future research should include a repeated measures design to chart the changes in behavior over time. Second, the sample size should be increased. Third, future research should either include girls as a part of the sample, or design a research study to specifically examine the social interaction behaviors of girls from these Chapter I schools.

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The Minneapolis Federation of Alternative Schools

Jim Storm

Nationally we are in the midst of a time in which issues of school reform as they relate to meeting the needs of educationally at-risk youth are receiving a significant amount of attention. One of the reform issues relates to the governance of the schools themselves. Models such as those in Chicago, with local school councils assuming major control (now determined to be unconstitutional), Boston, where there is debate over who will set school policy (the school board or city government), and Detroit, with its discussions centering around delivery of educational services by private schools with public funds, are but three examples of how the governance of educational systems is being examined, challenged, and changed.

A model operative in the City of Minneapolis is the delivery of accredited educational services for at-risk youth through schools that are partially funded by the public educational system yet housed and operated out of and under the control of private nonprofit organizations. This model had its beginning in the very early 1970s and has gone through a number of changes since the time of inception.

In the early 1970s agreement was reached between five alternative high schools (each within a larger private nonprofit organization) and the Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) that allowed each of these alternative programs to provide accredited educational services to students. While each school operated independently from the others, they provided mutual support to each other through a nonincorporated organization known as the Minneapolis Federation of Alternative Schools (MFAS).

The initial agreement between the MFAS and MPS contained the following points.

1. Federated schools could not teach religion.
2. Students would be encouraged to return to the public schools when ready.
3. The lead teacher at each school would be licensed.
4. Regular attendance would be kept.
5. Students would appear on the public school roles.
6. MFAS schools would receive some payment from MPS with some additional support in the form of books, supplies, and some equipment.

The '70s proved to be a period of solidification for each of the alternative schools within its own organization, with the following trends being most visible.

1. Each of the organizations of which the individual schools were a part began to mature and become stable.
2. Leadership within each organization changed quite frequently during the early '70s but became stable by the late '70s, allowing for the development of positive relationships among the leaders of each of the organizations.
3. The development of stable organizations with credible leadership to help build a trust relationship between MFAS and MPS.
4. Support from the MPS rose from $53,500 in 1975-76 with an average daily membership of 205 students to $131,963 in 1980-81 for an average daily membership of 261 students.

If the '70s were the initial phase of the MFAS, the second phase began with the 1981-82 school year. This second phase was marked by the strengthening of the Federation itself. The following points were dominant during this time.

1. In the state of Minnesota there was a budget crunch and public education took financial cuts. For the MFAS this meant reduced public funding. In 1980-81 the MFAS provided educational services to 261 students for $131,963. In 1981-82 MFAS provided educational services for 294 students for $108,000.
2. The MFAS had by now established its credibility within the larger funding community and sought financial support from this broader community as well as seeking the "clout" of community leaders in fighting what were viewed as unjustified cuts (to the point in time MPS had placed a ceiling on the total dollars available to the MFAS regardless of enrollment. It was openly recognized that the MPS benefited from its financial arrangement with the MFAS, being able to collect full aid for all students at MFAS schools while turning over a very small portion of the aid to MFAS schools).
3. The message from the community leadership, while supportive of the MFAS financial situation, also made the point that the MFAS would have to aggressively develop its own collective muscle.
4. Points 1-3 led the MFAS to consider and ultimately set aside many organizational "turf issues" and become an incorporated nonprofit organization. While the schools in each of the five organizations remained under the control of each organization, the relationship between the MFAS and MPS became the primary link between the public system and the private organizations.
5. The newly incorporated MFAS, at-

tempting to further its own credibility and enhance the positive development of the five schools, chose to participate in an accreditation process with the North Central Association of Schools. As a result of this process full accreditation was received for all schools in the federation.

6. National attention was now directed at the public education system, and many questions were being asked regarding the quality of educational services being delivered. A second wave of the national attention focused upon the needs and problems of high school dropouts. It became generally recognized that, for a significant number of students, the traditional school structure simply did not work.
7. Within the state of Minnesota the issue of educational choices was receiving a good deal of attention as various advocates of choice began to push their agendas at the state level.
8. Public school support for the programs ran from $131,963 in 1980-81 for an average daily membership of 261 students to $561,875 in the 1987-88 school year for 350 students.

Phase three in the development of the MFAS and its schools began with 1987-88 school year as a result of the passage of the High School Graduation Incentive Act (HSGI) by the Minnesota Legislature in the spring of 1987. This law was established to provide incentives and encouragement for all Minnesota students who were experiencing difficulty in the traditional education system. It allowed them to enroll in alternative programs or to get a fresh start in new traditional programs in order for them to complete a high school education. Among the alternatives was enrollment in nonprofit, nonpublic, nonsectarian programs that had a contract with a school district.

Currently, student eligibility criteria for enrollment in these programs is defined as follows by the State of Minnesota:

-Alternative programs are designed for those students who have fallen behind in satisfactorily completing course work or for those who desire to attend a program which better fits their individual needs.

-Alternative programs may elect to serve nonresident elementary students (age 5-11), secondary students (age 12-20) and/or adults qualifying under High School Graduation Incentives and Diploma Opportunities for Adults 21 and Over. Specific eligibility criteria are as follows:

Elementary

- May attend an alternative program if under the age of 12 (grade K and above) and if referred by a school district and accepted by an alternative program.

12-20 year olds

- Is at least two grade levels below the performance level for students of the same age in a locally determined achievement test; **or**

- Is at least one year behind in satisfactorily completing course work or obtaining credits for graduation; **or**

- Is pregnant or is a parent; **or**

- Has been assessed as chemically dependent; **or**

- Has been excluded or expelled (ages 12-16) from school; **or**

- Is between the ages of 12 and 20 and has been referred by the school district for enrollment in an alternative program.

Adults 21 & Over

- Has received fewer than 14 years of public or nonpublic education beginning at age 5; **and**

- Has already completed the studies ordinarily required in the 10th grade but has not completed the requirements for a high school diploma or the equivalent; **and**

  - At the time of application, is eligible for

  - unemployment compensation benefits, **or**

  - income maintenance and support services, **or**

  - services under the Displaced Homemaker Program, state wage subsidy program, or any other program under the Federal Job Training Partnership Act or its successor.

A student under the age of 21 who has obtained a GED certificate is eligible to enroll in a free diploma program.

An adult age 21 or over who has obtained a GED certificate is not eligible to enroll under the HSGI program since the certificate is considered to be equivalent to a high school diploma; if the individual does not qualify by any of the above, he or she may still attend by paying tuition. Not all alternative programs provide services for adults from other districts.

Since the 1987-88 school year the MFAS has had a contractual arrangement with the MPS for the delivery of educational services under HSGI. This law specifies that the financial reimbursement will be as follows:

Students enrolled in a private alternative program generate aid for the contracting district. The district must turn over at least 85 percent of this revenue to the private school. The formula for calculating the aid is Pupil Units x basic revenue.

Students attending fewer than 6 hours per day or for less than a full year generate pro-rated aid.

As a result of the HSGI, MFAS schools have gone from a reimbursement of $561,875 in 1987-88 for 350 students to $1,524,481 in the 1989-90 school year for 468 students.

In addition to the dramatic change in the financial resources available to the MFAS, the passage of HSGI allowed the individual organization of which the schools are a part to move away from a arrangement in which teachers were paid by both MPS and the individual organization and move to a system where all teachers are employed by the individual organizations.

The passage of the HSGI marked a point of public acknowledgement by the State of Minnesota that alternative schools were both effective and necessary for the delivery of services for at-risk youth.

In reviewing the history of MFAS, its current situation and its possible future several points emerge. These points are outlined here in summary form.

1. The ability of MFAS schools to survive and progress is, in the final analysis, the result of the performance of each of the schools. Possessing many of the characteristics identified as being of major importance in working with at-risk youth, the MFAS schools have met the needs of at-risk youth. This performance has been documented on an ongoing basis.
2. In a report entitled *Access to Opportunity — Experiences of Minnesota Students in Four Statewide School Choices Program 1989-90* released in December of 1990 which included students in the MFAS, it was found that the aspirations

of students who entered MFAS schools as related to their expectations to graduate and go on to college ran from 6 percent upon entering the program to more than 41 percent once in the program, while student satisfaction with their school rose from 25 percent to 75 percent.

3. The process of consistent, trusted leadership from the MPS assigned to work with MFAS can not be overestimated. A single staff person first carrying the title of Counselor on Assignment and now being identified as the Director of Alternative Programs has been very important in the building of the bridge between the two systems.
4. The MFAS struggles with its role as a collective body while recognizing the autonomy of each member agency. Consistent leadership over many years has fostered trusted relationships that have been able to withstand international organizational pressures.
5. At a time when public education is in a fluid condition and at a time of economic crunch within the state of Minnesota, it is important that programs such as the MFAS be visible to the policy-makers at both the local and state level.
6. The MFAS walks a very fine line maintaining its autonomy while receiving a major portion of each of the schools funding from the MPS. Alternatives are successful because they operate in a manner different from the traditional schools. These differences can not be compromised because of public school support.
7. One factor which has kept the MFAS at the cutting edge and ready to respond in nonconventional ways has been its ability to take risks. It will be important that the MFAS maintain its freshness and risk-taking ability even in light of potential conflict from its major funders.

With the emergence of choice in the public school system and with the recognition that traditional school settings don't work for a significant percentage of the population, we will continue to see new vehicles for the delivery of K-12 educational services. One such model is the one operating in the Minneapolis, where private, nonprofit, through an incorporated federation, contract with the public system for the delivery of educational services for at-risk youth.

Effective Strategies for At-Risk Youth: Creating a Climate for Success

Linda Webb Slaughter

Literature on the dropout dilemma shows that there is no single, widely accepted prevention program which works. A search of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database for years 1986-1990 produced 639 items related to practices and programs for public schools below the college level. A review of those items and 111 earlier relevant articles revealed common elements of dropout prevention programs which have been positively associated with school retention and dropout prevention. A synthesis of those elements provides a set of principles to guide dropout prevention programs and recommends a framework of policies for schools and systems. The framework is discussed with emphasis on climate and instruction components.

(1) Comprehensive planning and systematic approach to program implementation. The most successful intervention programs are well-planned and thoughtfully implemented to meet specific needs of the population served. Common planning practices of successful programs include: a needs assessment, involvement of all relevant publics from the earliest stages, orderly and rational implementation after resources and facilities which are necessary for success are provided, and an evaluation mechanism to provide feedback and allow for revision. Successful programs tend initially to keep dropout prevention programs small and/or focus on a particular area such as ninth grade (Sherman, 1987).

(2) School policies and structures which serve all students. Successful programs structure various school policies to encourage school membership and help students overcome impediments to engagement.

High absenteeism has repeatedly been found to be correlated with dropping out of school. Wheelock and colleagues (1986) recommend important policies dealing with attendance including: nonpromotion must be eliminated as a response to poor attendance; early, immediate response should meet absence; tardiness response should not include unaffordable academic consequences; individual assessment and appropriate services should be provided students who are chronically tardy/absent.

The association of disciplinary problems with dropping out and the futility of repeated out-of-school suspension of members of a population already at risk are well-established (Mahood, 1981). Alternative consequences such as in-school suspension and service programs should be coupled with counseling, conflict resolution, problem solving, and prevention efforts. Kaeser (1979) argues that discipline does not have to be an overriding problem in schools and that excluding children from school does not need to be standard practice. She suggests that schools with effective discipline programs are committed to the full development of students and that such schools seek student and staff ownership of rules to produce an environment where order emerges without exclusion of large numbers of students. Such schools have clearly written guidelines for acceptable student behavior with consequences for broken rules. They involve students, parents and faculty in development of school discipline policies, and they emphasize the positive aspects of students' behaviors. (Fox and Elder, 1980)

Students who are older than others in their class are more likely to drop out. Successful dropout prevention programs have a continuous progress, no-fail system based on meaningful accomplishment.

To meet the needs of all students, many districts are trying evening school, Saturday school, and year-round school. Other structures include block programs where groups of at-risk students receive instruction during part of the day and then go to vocational training or jobs, specialized alternative programs in separate facilities, schools-within-schools, and self-contained programs.

(3) A climate which provides a nurturing, supportive environment that focuses on individuals and building self-esteem. Schools, especially secondary schools, are often large and impersonal institutions with sour, dispirited atmospheres which discourage learning (Maeroff, 1988). To successfully intervene with at-risk students, schools must be designed to reduce alienation and promote student engagement. Environments promoting school retention are those in which achievement is respected and rewarded, teachers have high expectations, and student self-worth is reinforced by the holding of high standards. According to Wehlage (1986), critical climate factors are a "family-like" atmosphere and teachers committed to common goals who believe they can be effective with all students. A positive climate can exist only where strong and consistent school leadership and qualified, caring staff accept a proactive moral re-

sponsibility for educating all youth. Linton and Forster (1990) discuss climate in terms of a powerful environment structured to enhance achievement of objectives through positive expectations where students are expected to achieve in all dimensions of school life and staff are expected to project a success-oriented attitude; an affirmative dialectic wherein students are taught exactly how to meet expectations, not only academic but also personal and interpersonal; teacher assumption of roles of counselor, advocate, outreach person, and personal force who will not accept failure from the school, other staff, uninvolved parents, or students; and explicitly spelled out, desirable and undesirable behaviors and values.

Because children today often do not receive enough nurturing, positive attention from adults, faculty and staff must begin new dialogues with at-risk students and strive to open channels of communication with and between all students for interactions which are positive, affirming, and encouraging. Faculty and staff should be trained in effective techniques for communicating, and plans should be developed to maximize communication throughout school programs. A part of this communication should extend to fostering new dialogues between students so that the uniqueness celebrated by the developmental model is shared by all. In such an atmosphere the at-risk student is much more likely to cease being an outsider.

(4) A curriculum and instructional approach which helps all students succeed. Successful intervention programs provide relevant, meaningful, coordinated curricula based on real-life experiences and goals (Green and Baker, 1986). Major elements which must be addressed in the academic curriculum for high-risk students include (Blum and Spangehl, 1982) a wide range of cognitive skills, reasoning ability; communication skills, nontraditional instruction; competency-oriented disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies, revival of a general education curriculum, self-actualization with the academic experience, and integration of the students' social environment into schooling. Focused intervention program curricula are flexible, intensive (in the sense of providing small group or individual instruction), and promote access, quality education, and the right to career options.

Positive faculty attitudes and teaching practices that maximize student participation are major characteristics of effective schools. It is essential that at-risk students be instructed by teachers with positive attitudes toward student success, who employ teaching practices which involve students in the learning process more than traditional approaches which tend to isolate those at risk, and who emphasize higher order skills as well as basic skills (Hamilton, 1986).

The teachers who are most successful with at-risk students use a student-centered instructional approach. Moffett and Wagner (1983) define this approach as individualizing instruction, attending to students' developmental and personal needs, integrating affective and cognitive goals, and understanding the complexities of the communication act in order to communicate effectively with students. The student-centered classroom does not abandon the central role of the teacher. Instead, it provides a balance of teacher-directed and learner-directed instruction. The source of student-centered teaching strategy lies primarily in the students' ability to process information and to solve problems. In order to have successful student-directed learning (Knapp, et. al., 1980), teachers must: teach explicitly the underlying thinking processes along with skills; encourage students to use each other as learning resources and structure their interaction accordingly; and turn over more responsibility for learning to students as they become accustomed to constructing knowledge and applying strategies on their own. Students must be taught how to use learning strategies and to realize that success follows the correct use of those strategies.

At-risk students are often marginal participants or nonparticipants. Classrooms structured for success are those in which activities are designed to maximize student participation, thus reducing alienation while increasing a sense of belonging and achievement. Cooperative learning is one promising strategy which meets those requirements. It is a strategy that promotes positive interaction in small, heterogenous groups of students working together to receive a grade. Cooperative learning promotes motivation, builds skills, fosters both social and academic interaction, and rewards successful participation. It has the added advantage of being an inexpensive and relatively easy to implement strategy. (Lyman, 1989).

Structured and unstructured role playing, simulations, games and expressive and inactive experiences are other instructional strategies effective with at-risk students.

Evaluation is often a dismal experience for at-risk students. So that grading does not become a discourager to remaining in school, evaluation should be a two-step process with formative and summative aspects. The formative evaluation occurs during instruction to monitor learning progress and provide continuous feedback to students and teachers. With at-risk students such feedback is particularly important as it rewards effort and allows for strategy correction. Successful programs for dropout prevention often implement flexible grading systems to accommodate varying learning rates and styles among students.

(5) Broad-based partnerships providing an array of supportive services. Networking of school-community services with individual services provided through collaborative arrangements is fundamental to successful intervention. Auxiliary services and counseling must be provided and all services must be coordinated through some effective mechanism such as a student services support team.

(6) Parental involvement and support. Open communication with and acceptance of parents as full partners in the education process is a cornerstone of the successful at-risk program. This entails not only the acceptance of interested parents, but also the inclusion of the reluctant or unconcerned parent. Given the opportunity to communicate, parents must then be given active roles. Schools can no longer be a place where the "experts" determine all programs and nonprofessionals are noncontributors.

(7) Staff Development. Successful dropout intervention programs are undergirded by well-planned and adequately funded staff development components. Initial training of all staff creates knowledge, awareness, and enthusiasm. Continuing education and training provide updated information on changes, gather input from those directly involved, and maintain commitment and enthusiasm.

Research has yielded information about characteristics and practices of effective schools. Many features of effective schools, such as strong leadership, staff commitment, and high expectations, are consistent with successful programs for at-risk youth. Although the national reports have not focused on the dropout problem, effective schools must address the needs of at-risk youth. A dropout rate of over 25 percent makes imperative commitment of more effort to determine factor interaction producing dropouts. Coupled with extensive assessment of existing intervention programs, such research should yield information to define how schools may become truly effective by meeting the needs of all students.

The paper included examples of specific strategies and activities and a lengthy reference list.

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Section Three

Parent and Community Involvement

In most community reform efforts, the principle players have traditionally been, among others, the school system, health department, local government, juvenile justice system, business community, and family welfare agencies. A larger question this section poses is — who else needs to be involved?

Consider community centers and churches becoming involved because their individual resources can be expanded to facilitate family development and growth. Church members themselves do not usually belong in the at risk category, but the ones they can easily touch are the ones who are at risk. Couldn't missionaries or volunteers from a community center or church be sent into the local community to foster the growth of the family? The basic requirements will involve more than an occasional visit could attempt to achieve.

A second consideration is that neighborhood groups can be linked to supporting community agencies. This would require that any existing educational programs be linked to neighborhood groups to inform and relate those services that are provided by various agencies. Agencies usually extend their "dog and pony shows" to those groups that will help them in the financial arena. Consider informing the clients as a primary group that need to be handled in the beginning. Since members of neighborhood groups know the community, its people, and their needs, an *educated* neighborhood group could inform and refer those at-risk youth to the appropriate agency.

Thirdly, consider corporations and businesses and how they might become involved, but *not in the manner currently in vogue*. Business partnerships and business management knowledge have and are providing needed "fixing" to school systems. However, the kind of pressure that industry could place on its employees towards being better and more *effective parents* is needed. Business and industry could provide education and incentives for their employees to insure that as parents they're not neglecting their children and their child's successes in school. Increasing or decreasing a person's pay may be a far-fetched idea, but who else can so drastically affect a family member, other than his/her employer. Unless a parent feels it is important not only to his child's growth and development but to his own well-being, most at-risk parents are neglectful. Think what could occur if parents were required to help their children with homework, attend PTA meetings and meet with their child's instructors, enroll in parenting courses at his/her place of employment, save money for adequate childcare or post-secondary education in the company's savings plan, or spend free time with their children to receive an extra day of vacation, or $1.00 more per hour, etc.

These considerations, though somewhat far-fetched, are directions and beginning points for all of us to consider as we become involved. This section discusses many possible and appropriate ways each of us can become involved. The authors are describing workable and usable techniques. Consider these closely as you read this section.

Cities in Schools: Reconnecting the Disconnected through Communication, Collaboration, Cooperation and Celebration

Linda Hyler and Jim Malanowski

This article focuses on the partnership between Cities in Schools and other agencies and organizations which bring together resources to help those students who have either dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out. This paper gives suggestions for establishing a Cities in Schools partnership in both urban and rural areas and the steps necessary to ensure that a true partnership with local agencies occurs. This paper also gives strategies and suggestions for resources available for enhancing the partnership through training of volunteers and service providers as well as teachers and counselors. Practical suggestions for designing training activities which meet the needs of those students served in dropout prevention and intervention programs will be provided with an emphasis on both behavioral/social skills development and academic assistance.

Our intentions are to create interest in establishing Cities in Schools partnerships with the local communities to provide intervention/prevention programs for dropouts and at-risk youth. Specific objectives are:

- Participants will be provided with a plan for creating partnerships in their local communities.
- Participants will explore resources available in local communities which can become partners with schools.
- Participants will be provided with some suggestions for training activities and resources which deal with at-risk youth.
- Participants will be given practical instructional and behavioral strategies for helping to empower at-risk youth.

Evaluation: The long-term objective of this program is to generate interest among participants to return to their school districts and begin Cities in Schools partnerships. This objective can be measured by the number of new programs which will be established. The short-term measurement of objectives will be measured by a questionnaire to be given out at the end of the session which will ask direct questions related to workshop content.

Cities in Schools: Cities in Schools, Incorporated, is a comprehensive national nonpartisan, non profit organization devoted to dropout prevention. Cities in Schools operates in over 30 communities at over 150 educational sites throughout the United States. Linda R. Hyler is the state director of Cities in Schools of North Carolina. She is a former teacher of special education and at-risk youth and currently teaches courses in mainstreaming at North Carolina State University. She has been a consultant to school districts on curriculum and instructional needs of special needs students. She is president of the NC Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders.

Performance Learning Systems: PLS is a nationally recognized teacher training and design company which delivers inservice training to teachers, administrators and related service personnel. PLS is helping to design and provide training for CIS sites around the country. Dr. Jim Malanowski was a county truant officer, building administrator, central administrator, and is now the Georgia Coordinator for Performance Learning Systems and provides training throughout the southeast for teachers and school administrators.

Conclusion of the Parental Involvement Survey

Hillery M. Motsinger

High school students have a **200** percent better chance of being **high achievers** if the following traits are available:

1) they live with two parents;

2) they have parents who are actively involved in their school activities;

3) they miss less than 10 days of attendance at school per six weeks;

4) their mothers went beyond high school;

5) their fathers went beyond high school;

6) they score high on a self-motivation score;

7) they get along well with their teachers;

8) they have better-than-average teachers in the classroom.

These facts were found in a study by *Dr. Hillery Motsinger* of Dallas, Texas, a family counselor and seminar instructor.

In the study, Dr. Motsinger selected 417 high school students who were considered to be high achievers, either in the field of academics, athletics, music, or leadership. These 417 students were compared with 103 high-school-age prison inmates (53 males, 50 females) and 108 high school dropouts who were enrolled in a GED program.

The study was completed in the two metropolitan areas of Dallas and Ft. Worth, Texas. This study sought to discover the different factors involved in the development of 417 high achievers in high school, 108 youth who had dropped out and enrolled in a GED program, and 103 prison inmates who were arrested either while in school or after dropping out.

Conclusions drawn from the survey include the following:

1. The public schools are designed for the high-motivated student who "gets along" well with adults (teachers).

2. At-risk students (GED students and inmates) drop out mentally three or four years before they drop out physically.

3. The profile of the dropout is very similar to the inmate in family unity, sibling position, use of family members for help with homework, motivation to attend school and do homework, getting along with teachers, church attendance, school attendance, desire from parents, attitude regarding no pass/no play rules, parental educational achievements, and attitude regarding teacher influence on behavior.

4. High achievers came from moms and dads who had made their own education a priority. GED students and inmates came from moms and dads whose personal education was limited.

The education level of mom and dad will be a predictor of the educational level of the youth.

5. The high achievers perceived their parents as having a higher income than did GED students and inmates.

6. Parents of high achievers gave intrinsic reinforcement (attendance and higher expectations) while GED students and inmates received money and special privileges for doing well.

Personal attention is a better motivator than money and special privileges.

7. Higher achievers wanted to be "trusted," then "listened to" as the main traits in parents.

GED students listed "trust" and "listened to" as equally important. Nineteen gave correction as the third most desired trait.

Inmates wanted "correction" first, closely followed by "trust me." "Listen to me" was a distant third.

8. High achievers attended school with great regularity. At-risk (GED students and inmates) did not.

9. The GED students did not give their school teachers or principals very high marks for quality of teaching or for getting along with students.

Inmates rated the quality of their high school teachers and principals higher than did the GED students. The inmates also remembered spending more time on homework than did the GED students.

High achievers gave their principals lower ratings on "quality" than did inmates.

10. All types of students preferred *enthusiastic*, *direct*, *persuasive*, *people-oriented*, *friendly* teachers over the quiet, motivated, analytical, task-oriented, perfectionistic teacher.

11. High achievers did not use the counselors much for success in school. The at-risk student saw a strong need for counseling to help them succeed in school.

12. About 1/4 of the high achievers, GED students, and inmates spent about the same time on homework (12-16 hours per week). There were only a few high achievers (9 percent) who spent less than 3 hours per week, while 39 percent of the GED students and 34 percent of the inmates spent less than 3 hours per week on studies.

13. High achievers wanted high standards (no pass/no play) while GED students and inmates would have lowered the standards for extra-curricular activities.

14. More GED students (49 percent) and more inmates (43 percent) than high achievers (40 percent) reported parent-teacher contact during the elementary school years. A larger percentage of GED students (21 percent) and inmates (25 percent) than higher achievers (5 percent) reported their parents never going.

15. High achievers attended church with much greater regularity than GED students and inmates.

16. The high achievers, GED students and inmates all agreed that they would first take their personal problems to their "best friend" and then to their mother.

17. *Mothers* had the greatest influence on behavior of all subjects (high achievers, GED students, and inmates). Fathers came in second place. Teachers finished third place with high achievers, but seventh place with both GED students and inmates.

18. A *positive*, *cohesive relationship* was the *number one factor* necessary between parent and student to allow the parent to be influential in the behavior of the student. Respect, advice, communications and time together were also given.

19. High academic students can get along well with others (I) and yet be very analytical (C).

High athletic students are mainly public performance people (I).

High-achiever band students are disciplined (C) but willing to perform a technical and artistic talent in public

Leaders are public performers (I) who can handle the facts.

20. 86 percent of the high achievers came from two-parent families while only 46 percent of the inmates and 46 percent of the GED students lived in a two-parent family. While having two parents at home is not a requirement to becoming a high achiever, the odds are two-to-one in their favor.

City-As-School: Community as Classroom

Geoffry H. Cohl, III

City-as-School is an alternative, diploma-granting New York City public high school whose primary curriculum objective is to link students with learning experiences of a business, civic, cultural, political or social nature through–out any size community. The underlying concept is that the world of experiences can be joined with the world of learning. This makes school more relevant for students who find the traditional school setting threatening or unrelated to their present and future, or those with a moderate to great degree of success in the traditional setting who want new horizons in their education. Instead of attending classes in one building, students move from learning experience, to learning experience based on a program they choose by consulting the CAS catalog. They receive academic credit for each learning experience successfully completed. At present, students average 27-32 hours per week at several learning experience (LE) sites, utilizing community resources.

City-As-School (CAS) was founded in 1972. After a year of planning, with 4 faculty members and 15 students, CAS went into operation with 61 students and 5 faculty members in one room of a school building in Brooklyn, New York. Today, CAS has a student body of 1,200 students including our Executive Internship department, and a faculty of 80. It currently operates out of two sites, one in lower Manhattan and one on the Brooklyn campus of Long Island University. A third facility in the Bronx, New York, will be opened in September 1991.

City-As-School has a credit/no credit evaluation system. Students who successfully complete the requirements of each learning experience are granted credit towards a high school diploma. Depending on the nature of the experiences selected, the actual number of resources utilized during an eight-week cycle can vary. A student may have a program comprised of several short learning experiences (LEs) or one lengthy one. An LE may require a student's participation for hours beyond the normal school day or on weekends.

In 1977, City-As-School won a Title IV-C Validation Grant as an educational "model in excellence." As a result of validation, CAS won a Title IV-C Demonstration Grant to promote and to replicate the CAS model in various school districts across New York State.

In 1983, City-As-School was validated by the Joint Dissemination Review Panel of the United States Department of Education. In 1985, CAS was the recipient of a coveted National Diffusion Network (NDN) Award—"The Academy Award" of educational institutions. CAS was cited by the federal government's NDN as an exceptional program. The NDN has provided City-As-School with funds to set up schools modeled after CAS in other cities and communities across the USA. Currently, there are CAS replications in Maine, California, New York State, Alaska, Virginia, Washington, DC, and West Berlin, Germany.

CAS has been the subject of many articles in *The New York Times*, the *Daily News*, *The American Educator*, *Nation's Schools*, the *English Journal*, and *Synergist*. In addition, the school has been featured on WINS, WABC, and other radio stations, and on ABC, NBC and PBS television.

Student Profile

City-As-School accepts a cross-section of the high school population of New York City's five boroughs. These students represent almost every religious, ethnic, and social group in New York. They transfer to CAS from neighborhood high schools, private schools, out of state and from abroad. Preference is given to students who have completed the ninth and tenth grades, and to those who have fulfilled two years of math and science. However, each applicant is processed on an individual basis. Students lacking some ninth- and tenth-grade credit who nevertheless give some evidence of maturity and resourcefulness are encouraged to apply.

The Admissions Process

Due to the unique nature of the learning experience at City-As-School, the task of selecting students who can benefit from external learning situations is extremely important. The admissions coordinator is responsible for admitting new students, training and supervising student assistants and maintaining liaison with parents and prospective students.

Parents, students, and guidance counselors interested in City-As-School are invited to attend "open house" meetings held at regular intervals during the school year. These meetings are small group question-and-answer sessions and are conducted by the CAS admissions coordinator and trained CAS student recruiters.

The entrance interview, required of all student applicants, is a structured session which yields a standardized evaluation of each student's group awareness, communication skills, and style.

Throughout the entire admissions process, the City-As-School admissions coordinator works closely with the guidance department and administration of the feeder high schools.

Academic Support Services

City-As-School tries to provide students with external learning experiences (LEs) in the community that will fulfill all their credit needs. This isn't always possible. At various times, as needed, CAS gives courses in remedial writing, creative writing, remedial math, advanced math, social studies, economics, health, and a variety of independent study projects in many credit areas. These classes are taught by the teacher advisors who function as our in-house teaching staff and who also provide support, guidance and direction for the students in his/her group. This is an essential part of the advisor's work because many of our students come from troubled backgrounds. Some have histories of truancy; some have family problems; some find the regimentation of the traditional school oppressive and alienating. The advisor is the first person to whom they turn, and he/she becomes the surrogate parent or older brother or older sister figure. The smallness and intimacy of the school helps to create and maintain the family feeling or communal atmosphere. This supportive atmosphere is key to the success of the school. The advisors and the rest of the staff provide that support network.

External Learning Experiences

The resource department consists of a staff of teachers entitled resource coordinators (RCs). All of the RCs are primarily responsible for registering students in learning experiences, monitoring their progress and evaluating their learning at resources through screening and interview techniques, conferences, phone calls to resource people, on-site visits and review of written work. This responsibility brings with it a counseling approach to problems that arise. The RCs evaluate the work done and decide if credit is to be granted.

The resource coordinators also develop new resources (leads), and develop curricula (Learning Experience Activity Packets) for their own caseload of learning experiences.

Guidance Support Services

The guidance department consists of a guidance counselor, social worker, college advisor, substance abuse counselor, and a school-based support team for educational evaluations. Their goal is to promote personal development and scholastic success of CAS students through a variety of counseling approaches which are humanistic, preventive, realistic and supportive.

However, at CAS, all staff members understand that guidance is an essential part of their role. Communication between staff members is an integral part of our program.

Present and Future Planning

City-As-School has developed a multifaceted approach to educating at-risk students. This approach effectively reaches the at-risk secondary student who is a potential dropout. We have developed off-site learning facilities where the emphasis is on acquiring academic skills as well as career exploration, and it is very cost-effective.

Our college studies program, a cost-free educational choice, offers City-As-School students the opportunity to do college-level work while attending high school. This program is very beneficial in helping develop greater self-esteem and academic excellence in our student population.

This year we have introduced a multi–cultural program consisting of three parts; for students with limited English proficiency, for monolingual students gaining proficiency in a foreign language, and a multicultural student exchange program. We are exploring the effectiveness of external resources with this student population.

Because we are funded by NDN, City-As-School offers in-service training sessions for all personnel interested in program development and implementation both at City-As-School and on other sites. We have the potential for replicating this successful program in any community that has an at-risk student population.

Strategies and Programs for Involving At-Risk Youth

Brad Zervas

Northfield Mount Hermon School (NMH), founded in 1879 for children who could not afford an education, has a long history of working with students from diverse economic, social, geographical, ethnic, and academic backgrounds. Recently, NMH's efforts to identify, place, and retain students from low-income backgrounds have become more community-based, reflecting the important role that family, neighborhood, and community play in determining student success.

As part of its efforts to foster greater understanding among private and public school educators, community leaders, and private industry, the School established in 1988 an Office of Public and Private Partnerships. Through this office, the Community Scholars Program was initiated in 1989, enabling a number of students from low-income backgrounds to enroll in NMH on a full-time basis. In addition to working with community-based social service agencies such as Nueva Esperanza (New Hope) in Holyoke, Massachusetts; the Community Renewal Team of Greater Hartford, Connecticut; and El Puente (The Bridge) in Brooklyn, New York, several area banks and foundations have provided money for tuition, student travel, books, laundry, insurance, and athletic equipment. And finally, local businesses have provided the School's Community Scholars with training and employment opportunities during school vacations. By doing so, those businesses intend to encourage a greater sense of community in those students and convince them to commit themselves to the development and revitalization of their neighborhoods.

It has long been understood that students from communities like the ones represented in this partnership often find the transition into schools like NMH to be quite difficult. In addition, many of these students encounter problems when they return home for vacation. The Director of Youth Services at CRT, along with her counterpart at Nueva Esperanza and El

Puente, have helped the Community Scholars to address many of the issues associated with the transition from home to school. To facilitate this process, a number of initiatives have been employed, enabling the students to strike a comfortable balance between the two different worlds in which they must learn to move.

The Community Scholars Program at NMH targets students that traditionally have been ignored by independent schools. In identifying and placing young people from low-income backgrounds, independent schools have traditionally focused on the "best" and "brightest." Unfortunately, the very tools used by independent schools to measure a student's potential for success have, in fact, too often prevented them from reaching those who most need help. The Community Scholars Program, in contrast, seeks to identify such young people.

From its inception, the focus of the Community Scholars Program has been on students who showed potential but who have low standardized test scores, lacked the space or environment at home to complete their home-work assignments, and had experienced only marginal success in their public schools. In the traditional view, this academic and social profile would have suggested an inability to meet the demands of a rigorous academic program. It was our belief, however, that a nurturing boarding school program, encouraged by the students' public school officials and incorporating well-planned and significant community-based support, would be a positive alternative for these students. We began the program with this expectation, which the initial success of our Community Scholars has justified.

The School's ability to meet the educational and social needs of its Community Scholars has been immeasurably strengthened by our program of community cooperation. Thanks to the program, we have much more information and a greater understanding of each scholar's personal and educational background. To help in this process, cooperating agency staff members visit individual scholars on campus and work to increase understanding among school counselors, advisors, dorm heads, and teachers. In addition, NMH has continued to send school administrators and educators to Holyoke, Hartford, and Brooklyn to work with agency officials and others in an effort to maintain and strengthen our strong bonds with these communities.

Public school educators and officials have also played an enormously important role in this initiative. Their active participation and cooperation have enabled us to identify appropriate candidates. To further advance this cooperation program, we are currently conducting discussions in each community concerning teacher and student exchanges, student internships, athletic contests, and jointly planned conferences. We hope that our Community Scholars Program is only the beginning.

The Community Scholars Program is a model that could have national significance. It could, we think, be easily replicated by other interested communities, social service agencies, and independent schools. In New England alone, independent boarding schools control endowments which total well over a billion dollars and serve nearly 35,000 students annually. These are resources which rarely touch low-income students with culturally respectful and rigorous academic programming.

Although the immediate results of our Community Scholars Program suggest that we have developed a working model, a fuller evaluation of the program's effectiveness must wait until some of the scholars have graduated. It is well known that colleges and universities today are experiencing great difficulty in trying to enroll and retain students from low-income backgrounds. One important indicator of this program's success will be reflected in our Community Scholars' ability to enter and succeed at four-year colleges and universities. It is our hope and expectation that the Community Scholars will graduate from Northfield Mount Hermon with the necessary social and academic skills to meet the challenges of post-secondary education. They will have already experienced adjusting to being away from home, to a roommate and to a rigorous academic program — conditions that undermine the efforts of a disturbing number of college-bound students from low-income backgrounds, In short, they will be better prepared and more likely to succeed and graduate.

Applying Family Therapy to the School Setting: A Systems Approach to Understanding and Solving Behavior Problems

Barney J. Brawer, III

This workshop will present essential concepts from Family Systems Therapy and provide examples of their application to the school setting for the solution of behavior problems. Videotaped excerpts will illustrate interventions designed to free children from dysfunctional roles in the peer system. Critical differences between the therapy setting and the school or classroom will be emphasized in order to clarify appropriate use of this material by teachers, administrators, and other non-therapists. Participants will be invited to engage in the ongoing exploration of these new conceptual tools for solving behavior problems.

Background

Most of the training of teachers, counselors, and administrators concerning behavior problems — and consequently most of the response to such problems — is based on a psychology of individuals. Yet the problematic behavior that educators encounter commonly involves multiple players in complex, often repetitious, interactions:

- the "class clown" whose misbehavior is actively encouraged by other students in the class
- two or more students in repeated conflict, with the teacher alternately judging, mediating, and punishing
- struggles involving a student, his or her parents, and school personnel in frequent, but ineffective, encounters.
- disagreements among the faculty about the best way to respond to misbehavior, with students perceiving and manipulating these differences.

These are situations for which a psychology of individuals is inadequate.

Over the last 25 years, developments in the fields of anthropology, sociology, and psychology have led to a new understanding of the interactive nature of human problems and the role of interpersonal systems in maintaining problematic behavior. New forms of intervention aimed at the family system have proven effective in situations where individual therapy has limited impact. Theory and technique from Family Systems Therapy can provide educators with new ways of understanding interactive problems in the classroom or school — and new techniques for intervening to create change.

Outcomes and Understanding

- symmetrical, complementary, and metacom–plementary transactions of power in two-person systems

- the means by which power is exercised from a position of seeming weakness, as in the psychological games of "Yes, But" and "Wooden Leg"
- the development of two-person conflicts into "eternal triangles"
- differences between the culture of women and the culture of boys in the regulation of closeness and distance, the negotiation of interdependence and independence
- why our intuitive responses are the basis of our best and worst moves (the concept of countertransference)
- enables teachers, counselors, and school administrators to analyze why many well-intentioned responses result in little or no change in the targeted problem.

Techniques which form the basis for designing interventions to change problematic situations include: reframing, de-triangling, enactment, the use of metaphor, paradoxical approaches, and interventions aimed at the "function" of the symptom.

This information provides an introduction to the "systemic approach," and offers guidance for those who wish to use this material to develop new forms of intervention appropriate to their own professional roles.

Section Four

Reforming and Changing Delivery Systems

This section addresses some of the strategies and techniques teachers of at-risk youth must employ in order to change the way things are. Knapp, Turnbull, and Shields (1990) explored this problem in their article entitled "New Directions for Educating the Children of Poverty" (*Educational Leadership*, 48, 1, 4-8, 1990). Their argument, put simply, is that the old conventional wisdom that one should not expect much out of disadvantaged pupils because of their circumstances has done little but provide the rationale for maintaining a permanent lower educational class. It is maintained that if we are to increase the at-risk student's performance, educators must adopt strategies that encourage higher expectations of these students.

Knapp also suggests that this can take place in the realms of student demographics, school curriculum, teacher instruction, classroom management, and student proficiency. There is currently common agreement among teachers that before disadvantaged kids can successfully meet the rigors of school, careful attention should be paid to the environment in which they are raised. This can be done by: A) Respecting the students' cultural background, B) Encouraging students to draw on and build on their personal experiences, C) Explaining assumptions, expectations, and ways of doing things in school.

The authors within this section contend that in dealing with the low-achieving student some changes also must be made in existing curriculums. To summarize their suggestions I've outlined the following points from the articles in Section Four:

A) Focus on meaning and understanding from the outset.

B) Balance routine skill-learning with complex tasks.

C) Provide rationale for skill-learning that establishes clear reasons for needing to learn the skill.

D) Influence attitudes and beliefs about the academic content areas.

E) Eliminate redundancy in the curriculum.

The importance of reforming and changing the system hinges on the needs of students. The information flow must begin. Relevance and appropriateness must be part of the self-evident facts. Students will make an effort, especially if teachers are making an effort.

The Kentucky Reform Act: Its Impact on Reforming and Changing the Educational Delivery System for At-Risk Students

Betty S. Griffin

"In all things purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, but one as the hand in things essential for mutual progress."

Booker T. Washington

Overview

There are many things educators, economists, and sociologists disagree about, but the one thing they all agree on is that this nation will only be as strong as the quality of education possessed by its citizens. "All children can learn." So powerful is this message left by the late Ron Edmonds that, years after his death, legislators and educational policymakers in the Commonwealth of Kentucky have adopted this core belief as the theme for its massive education reform act.

The level of excitement generated by the 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act can only be matched by the anticipation of the crowd as the winning thoroughbred approaches the finish line at Churchill Downs on Derby Day.

This act, commonly referred to as House Bill 940, signals the rebirth of Kentucky's educational delivery system for ALL students regardless of socioeconomic background, heritage or ethnic affiliation. In a recent article entitled "What Really Counts in Schools," Elliot Eisner, Professor of Education and Art at Stanford University, supports Kentucky's philosophy articulated in the following manner:

> *My hope is that educators will be moved to begin the kind of dialogue that leads to genuine reform in education, a reform that pays attention to what really counts."*

According to Jack Foster, Secretary of Kentucky's Education and Humanities Cabinet, previous educational efforts have centered on universal opportunity, not universal achievement.

The At-Risk Population

Judith Jones, Director of the National Center for Children in Poverty, concluded from comprehensive national study that all poor families and their children are not alike. Their histories and cultures differ as much as their current life circumstances, and the programs and implementation responses must differ as well. Minority children under six are much more likely to be poor than white children under six.

Data reported by the National Center for Children in Poverty indicated that in 1987, 48 percent of Black children, 42 percent of young Hispanic children, and 29 percent of young children from other minority groups were poor. In sharp contrast, 13 percent of young white children were poor in 1987.

Thus, Kentucky's reform movement has recognized this fact and broadened its services to include variables other than socioeconomic status in its organizational model for implementation. The success of Kentucky's sweeping and comprehensive reform mandate is contingent upon many factors, but none more important than improved academic achievement for Kentucky's children labeled at risk.

While the Reform Act has selected to define the term at risk according to federal school lunch program eligibility criteria for "free" lunch, many school district personnel have broadened the criteria to include the culturally diverse; the "marginal learner" not served by 94-142 legislation; and children who possess little identification with the school.

Despite the difficulty of separating only a few key elements from the comprehensive reform plan, four areas of critical concern to the success of meeting the affective and cognitive needs of these populations serve as focal points. These are professional development for educators; rewards for academic progress of students, including the at-risk population; sanctions imposed on schools for failure to meet mandated standards, and methods by which the implementation process will be monitored.

In its description of House Bill 940, The National Education Association, in its October 1990 newsletter stated,

> *"Across the nation, educators are watching closely to see if Kentucky's changes can trace a new educational blueprint for their own states."*

While not all the 16,000 school districts in the nation, 50 different state systems and thousands of private elementary and secondary schools will monitor Kentucky's delivery system, it is safe to say that national media coverage has cast many educated eyes on the Commonwealth.

Attacking the Problem of At Risk Students: A Model for Boards of Education

Thomasine Hardy and Nehemia Smith

In 1984, the North Carolina School Boards Association formed a Black Caucus as a part of the association in order to bring issues concerning the problems of Black students in the state to the forefront. The caucus meets annually during the state convention of the association. During its meeting, Black school board members and other board members who shared the same concerns, talked about the problems facing Black students in their school districts.

In 1989, the Black Caucus expressed its concern that Black, other minority, and at-risk students do not receive the same benefit from the educational system in North Carolina as do other students. For this reason, the caucus dedicated itself to ensuring that all students have an equal and equitable opportunity to benefit from public education in the state.

The caucus determined that though many board members in North Carolina are concerned about Black, other minority, and at-risk students, it is the only formal structure through which the association examines the plight of this population. Consequently, it expanded its focus to include more students. In addition, the caucus accepted that if anything is going to be done to improve the plight of these students, school board members must stop just talking about the problems and take significant action to eliminate them. School board members set the policies which cause things to be done in school districts. They hire the personnel to develop and implement programs to ensure that children learn and that each child has an equal opportunity for learning.

In 1989, the caucus took a different tact. Rather than just meet on an annual basis to talk about the problems of Black students, the members of the caucus decided that it was time to take action to address the problems of a growing number of students. The group became more structured and began to explore ways to attack the problems of these students. It adopted the following statements of purpose:

> To provide a forum for discussion of the unique needs of minority and at-risk students in North Carolina;
>
> To adopt an annual program which addresses the unique needs of minority and at-risk students and which contains

strategies for removing barriers to the success of these students;

To encourage the adoption of the caucus program by each local board of education in the state;

To facilitate the coalescence of school and community groups to address the needs of minority and at-risk students; and

To provide support to individual caucus members, other school board members, and school administrators in implementing the caucus program.

The caucus has also adopted a statement of beliefs for itself and which it will encourage the association to adopt:

All children can learn and must be provided the support necessary to facilitate that learning;

Through efforts of the Black Caucus, the academic achievement of Black, other minority, and at-risk students will improve;

Though all school board members are concerned about the plight of Black, other minority, and at-risk students, the caucus is the only formal structure of the Association through which the plight of these students is examined;

The unique needs of Black, other minority, and at-risk students require that specific efforts be directed toward identifying these needs and reshaping the current educational structure such that identified needs are better addressed;

All school board members must be aware of the unique needs of all Black, other minority, and at-risk students, especially those who are educated in the school system of the board member;

All boards of education should ensure that through policy, school administrators have the support necessary to address the needs of Black, other minority, and at-risk students;

Among the roles of all school board members, especially those who are members of the Black Caucus, is ensuring that the needs of Black, minority, and at-risk students are addressed;

Boards of education are responsible for ensuring that adequate and appropriate personnel are employed to work with Black, other minority, and at-risk students;

Through efforts of the Black Caucus, the number of students who are labeled at risk will decline; and

The Black Caucus can serve as a catalyst to cause and assist efforts by boards of education, other governmental agencies, and community groups in addressing the needs of Black, other minority, and at-risk students.

The caucus is in the process of developing a program through which at-risk students can be identified, their educational struggles highlighted, and through which the association and local boards of education can begin to take positive steps toward improving their plight. It has identified four areas as the initial primary targets of its efforts: the students, the parents and community, the school staff, and policymakers. For each of these areas, the caucus has adopted a statement concerning the current condition and goals which it will seek to reach in order to improve the school-related circumstances of students.

The caucus has adopted a structure for involving both Black and majority board members in the development of its program. The membership of the caucus consists of any board member who elects to attend the caucus meeting and varies from meeting to meeting. Other board members who can make a contribution toward the development of the caucus program are asked to participate.

Those who attended the 1990 caucus meeting were asked to volunteer to work with one of the four target program areas that have been adopted. A committee of volunteers was formed for each of the program areas. Between annual meetings of the caucus, each of the committees will meet to discuss issues related to its program area and to develop specific strategies for meeting the goals of the caucus.

To ensure continuity of efforts, one member of the association staff works with each group and is responsible for logistical arrangements associated with the committees and the full caucus.

The work of each committee is combined in one document which constitutes the program for the full caucus. When completed, the program will be presented to the full association for adoption and will be distributed to each local board of education. Where appropriate, the program will be included in the legislative program of the association.

The Caucus believes that through its efforts, local boards of education will be encouraged to do more about addressing the needs of minority and at-risk students. It also believes that it can bring enough attention to the problem that school board members, who have responsibility for improving the circumstances of these students, will begin to do more and that the number of at-risk students in the state will decline.

A Humanistic High Technology Program for At-Risk Students

Dale J. Kadlecek

In the Broward County Public School System in Broward County, Florida, many diverse strategies have been employed to address the needs of at-risk high school students. Despite modifications in the instructional delivery system, smaller class size, and various adjustments to the existing county and state curriculum frameworks, it has been through the diligent efforts of committed teachers, staff members, and community volunteers that limited success has been attained relative to the at-risk student population.

In the Spring of 1990, a comprehensive effort was made to develop a unique mini-school (school-within-a-school) program for 80 at-risk students at Northeast High School. Utilizing a Florida Department of Education Grant, a pilot program, based in large part upon the very successful Vero Beach Dropout Prevention Program, was developed. With the help of dedicated building and district level administration and staff, parent and community volunteers, and a very supportive Broward County School Board, the IMPACT (IMPROVE MOTIVATION, PERFORMANCE AND ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH CAREER TRAINING) Program was conceived.

Subsequent to the approval of the Department of Education Grant, the IMPACT Program emerged as a school-within-a-school with a performance-based, state-of-the-art computer assisted WICAT, instructional delivery format. A voluntary team of teachers in the areas of mathematics, science, social studies, and English was recruited and a daily period of high-nurturant counseling was added to the program to create a challenging, humanistic learning environment for five of the required seven periods of the school day. Furthermore, an extensive career-vocational component consisting of the following choices was integrated into the academic and counseling program components to create a comprehensive program for the selected at-risk students who were entering into the second or third year of their high school experience:

- air conditioning and heating technology
- automotive technology
- business/office occupations
- cabinet making
- child care
- electronics technology
- graphic arts
- on-the job-training

After the curriculum, hardware, and program decisions were made, three classrooms were redesigned to facilitate the implementation of the IMPACT Program hardware systems. Each of the classrooms was converted to modified computer labs with 24 computer work stations, a teacher control station, and secured areas for file servers. Additional modifications included the installation of ceramic boards, telephones, and electric cut-off panels in each room.

Concomitant to the development of these program elements was the identification of student eligibility criteria. The identification of at-risk students was seemingly an easy task. Factors such as grade point average, credits attempted versus credits earned, attendance, and discipline records were efficiently gathered. Subsequent to the perusal of this data was the recognition that past dropout prevention programs at Northeast had used these criteria for student selection without monumental success relative to student persistence and/or performance in school. Furthermore, the feedback from the teachers involved in the past programs was less than encouraging. After brainstorming this issue with a staff-administrative team, what emerged was a comprehensive process consisting of teacher recommendations, guidance and administrative review, and student and parent commitment. Operationally the following guidelines were instituted to aid teachers in making their recommendations.

- Although not performing, the student is perceived as capable of doing grade-equivalent work.

- The student appears uninterested in school and is generally apathetic toward school as evidenced by tardiness, truancy, and low grades.

- The student does not exhibit serious and/or frequent disciplinary problems in classes or on campus.

- The student will not have earned 12 credits prior to the start of the academic year.

Subsequent to the teacher recommendations, the guidance counselors reviewed the students recommended and offered constructive input. Students who were eligible for other programs, such as special education and bilingual education programs, were noted although not necessarily excluded from the program. The number of credits attempted and earned was verified, and the student's anticipated number of total credits was declared. The list was passed on to the administrators, who scrutinized the students recommended and offered critical input regarding disciplinary problems and past efforts relative to addressing tardiness and truancy.

Emerging from the initial list of teacher referrals was a list of approximately 140 students. In groups, the program director met with these students to explain the program and the procedure for the students to gain access to the program. Students were provided literature for parent review and encouraged to have their parents contact the IMPACT director with questions and/or concerns. A requirement for all enrollments into the program was an enrollment form signed by the parent and the student acknowledging the requisite commitment to the program. Subsequent to this process was the enrollment of 80 students in the program. Additionally, seven returning dropout students were enrolled in the program. The initial total of 87 exceeded the target of 80 students; but there were four students who, when the school year began, immediately opted not to participate.

The emergent delivery system for the Impact Program is performance-based. The hardware and software for three learning center labs are provided by the WICAT Systems. Essentially, all instruction is delivered via the computer; traditional textbooks are not used. Each student progresses at his or her own pace through computerized curricula in mathematics, science, social studies, and English that follow standard county and state curriculum frameworks. When a student completes all course work in each of the academic areas, she/he takes a validation test. If the student is successful, credits are awarded and, pending satisfactory completion of the State Standard Assessment Test and attainment of a certifiable vocational skill in one or more of the previously mentioned elective vocational programs, the student is certified ready to graduate. Concomitant to the academic course work is the preparation for the student to pass the State Standard Assessment Test (SSAT). Each student receiving a standard high school diploma in Florida must pass this test, which is given initially in the tenth grade and subsequently readministered twice annually until the student passes. In the event a student completes all graduation requirements and does not pass this test, a certificate of completion is awarded in lieu of a regular diploma.

By virtue of the performance-based design, it is conceivable that students in the IMPACT Program will complete their graduation requirements prior to the time that their class graduates. Broward County School District has no provisions for early graduation; therefore, options were created to address this potential concern and to function as motivators to encourage students to complete the program. As students work through the computerized curriculum and demonstrate that they are competent in each of the subject areas mathematics, science, social studies, and English — they are offered continuation options. Specifically, a student may opt to pursue one or more of the following:

—college credit courses on-campus at Broward Community College
—additional vocational courses on campus at Northeast High School
—additional vocational training at the area vocational center
—additional on-campus high school elective and/or college preparatory course work and/or student aide responsibilities
—DCT work release program

It should be noted that Broward Community College courses are offered to all IMPACT students at no cost for tuition, fees, or textbooks. However, the students need to obtain transportation to and from the college campus.

The day-to-day operation of the program is based upon students taking four academic classes, a two-hour vocational course and a peer counseling/learning strategies class. Students, typically, work on the computers in classes of less than 20 students during 55-minute academic periods. They may take periodic breaks as needed but characteristically do not leave their workstation nor the classroom. During passing periods, IMPACT students move within the three connected labs, to and from vocational classes, and to and from learning strategies class.

Grading in the academic classes and the

learning strategies class is not competitive. Each student's performance is evaluated as satisfactory or not satisfactory. Simply, if the student is able to demonstrate progress in learning new skills at a rate acceptable to the teacher, then a satisfactory evaluation is assigned. In vocational courses, the normal A-F district grading policy is employed. Academic, learning strategies, and vocational teachers work together closely to monitor aggregate student performance. In certain instances, teachers may informally reassign pupils among themselves to reduce personality issues and to enhance learning opportunities. Additionally, the teachers work together to evaluate student attendance and behavior. Strategies to motivate and encourage marginal students are conceived and evaluated by the teaching team.

Given the fact that the IMPACT students are at risk relative to their potential to grad-uate from high school, discipline is a significant concern. The students are in the program because they have not successfully fit into a traditional high school model. Discipline is enforced by the teachers and supported and/or supplemented by the program director. Normal district and building consequences are employed with the exception of an in-house internal suspension supplanting the building internal suspension program. For many of the students, daily sign-in sheets for attendance and performance monitoring are employed. This strategy helps non-performing students recognize their responsibility to the program and the need for a commitment, and it also provides a basis to justify termination of the program for the recalcitrant student.

In an effort to supplement the resources that the academic, vocational and learning strategies teachers individually and collectively focus upon the needs of the IMPACT students, there is an aggressive family counseling program. All parents of IMPACT students are encouraged to participate in a weekly parent support group. Through this group, parents receive feedback regarding the program and their student's performance, are able to communicate in a therapeutic manner with other parents of at-risk students, and are able to establish a rapport with a trained family counselor for optional individual family counseling. IMPACT students are able to participate in formal/informal groups with the family counselor, and as needed, may utilize her services individually. In addition to the family counseling services for the IMPACT students, an aggressive mentoring program has been established for selected students. With the help of the Northeast High School Partners in Excellence, American Telephone and Telegraph (AT & T) and MidAtlantic Bank, students have been paired with adult volunteers to assist them with academic work and to provide them with a personal relationship to enhance their personal-social development.

A key component of the program is the use of varied experiences away from the school. Commonly, field trips to diverse, socially relevant and educationally pertinent locations are conducted as an enrichment activity and/or an incentive for attendance and performance. This has been critical in stimulating interest in the community college and its programs.

Accountability is a critical aspect of any program. Given the extraordinary commitment made by the School Board of Broward County and the State of Florida Department of Education to facilitate the development and implementation of this program, it is essential that program goals and measurable programs objectives be established and monitored. Listed below are the goals and objectives for the 1990-91 IMPACT Program.

Program Goals

- To assist each student in fulfilling his/her potential by obtaining career oriented instruction, and graduating with a regular diploma.

- To help the student to build basic skills, learn techniques of inquiry, and gain a fund of knowledge.

- To assure that the student is introduced to the civic and moral values of mankind's cultural heritage.
- To help the student to grow physically, emotionally and aesthetically.

Program Objectives

- After one year of participation, 60 percent of the students will show significant positive change in their attitudes toward school, self, family, and teachers as demonstrated by results of pre-and post-tests utilizing the Demos D Scale.
- After one year of participation, 60 percent of the students will show a statistically significant change in attendance patterns.
- After one year of participation, IMPACT students, classified as ninth grade, will score at a level equal to or in excess of the general student population.
- After one year of participation, the tenth-grade IMPACT students will show mastery consistent with the general school population on the State Student Assessment Test (SSATII).
- After one year of participation, 60 percent of the students will show an increase in their persistence rate (staying in school vs. dropping out).
- After one year of participation, IMPACT students will demonstrate an earned grade point average equal to or in excess of like regular education students.
- After one year of participation, 60 percent of the students will demonstrate a promotion rate based on earned credit equal to regular education students.

In conclusion, the IMPACT Program success is dependent upon the joint efforts to staff, parents, district administration, community support, and student commitment. After one semester, there is a strong indication that all groups are working together successfully.

A Model Workshop for Teachers of Disadvantaged Vocational Students in Inner-City Schools

Albert H. Gardner

This paper reports on the cross-discipline planning and delivery of a three-week summer workshop for teachers of disadvantaged vocational students in inner-city schools in Baltimore, Maryland. The workshop, the last in a series of four annual workshops, represents the cumulative experience from those efforts and is presented as a model program.

Planning. The workshop planning, including the formulation of goals, was through the collaborative efforts of persons from the Vocational Division of the Baltimore City Public Schools, the University of Maryland (College Park) departments of Special Education, Industrial Education, and Human Development. (The workshop goals are listed in the evaluation section.)

Staff. The teaching staff consisted of three persons: a professor from Industrial Education, a professor from Human Development, and a public school special education teacher. These individuals were selected, respectively for their expertise in vocational education, adolescent development, and the education of students with special needs.

Participants. The participants were 29 teachers from eight vocational high schools in Baltimore City (18 vocational teachers, 11 academic teachers).

Format and Methods. The workshop was in session for five hours daily during the three-week period. Participants earned three hours of academic credit and were paid the equivalent of three weeks teaching salary. Follow-up meetings for participants under the direction of the teaching staff were planned for the upcoming school year.

The activities for the workshop directed toward meeting the program's goals included: lectures, small and large group discussions, individual and small group work sessions, individual conferences, and consultant visits. A major focus was the development by individuals or small groups of curriculum units for use in the participants' classes. The units included behavioral objectives, activities, materials and resources. Participants gave presentations of their curriculum units on the last day of the workshop with representatives from the Baltimore City Vocational Division in attendance. A copy of each of the units was deposited in the Vocational Division as a resource for other teachers.

Grading for the workshop was a cooperative effort of the teaching staff based on attendance, participation, and completion of the curriculum unit.

Consultants. Eight consultants (resource personnel) were invited to give half-day presentations on the following topics: curriculum planning, innovative techniques in special education, learning packages, reading materials, reading diagnosis, special education, drugs, and sex education.

Evaluation of Workshop. An important component of the workshop was participant evaluation of the workshop goals, their personal accomplishments, the teaching staff, and the consultants. The evaluation provided information which was used during the workshop and which was helpful in planning and implementing the follow-up sessions. Such material was also useful in planning other workshops. Formal rating procedures were used in all but the evaluation of the first week of the workshop.

First Week Evaluation. An informal discussion session was held for approximately one hour at the end of the first week of the workshop. Participants and staff discussed their perceptions of the format and progress of the workshop at that point. The discussion was also an opportunity for participants to make suggestions for the remainder of the workshop.

Second Week Evaluation. At the end of the second week, participants rated nine personal accomplishments that the teaching staff felt to be desirable outcomes of the workshop at that time. These accomplishments, which appear below, were rated on a four-point scale: 4, excellent; 3, good; 2, fair; 1, poor. There was also space provided for comments and suggestions.

Evaluation of Personal Accomplishments

1. I have been able to identify myself as a participant in the large group discussion sessions.

2. I have been able to identify myself as a participant in the small group discussion sessions.

3. I have evaluated my values and attitudes which I hold and believe in as a teacher.

4. I have gained the security to risk exposing my attitudes and values by understanding other people in the workshop.

5. I can identify a variety of vocational oriented approaches to meet the educational needs of disadvantaged students.

6. I can identify a number of teaching strategies that can help me meet the needs of my students.

7. I am more familiar with resources I can call upon in meeting the needs of my students.

8. I know how to develop instructional materials.

9. I am more aware of the needs of my students and the strengths they bring with them.

Third Week Evaluation. On the last day of the workshop, participants evaluated four components of the workshop: (1) Workshop Goals, (2) Teaching Staff, (3) Consultants, and, (4) Overall Workshop Rating. Each of these evaluation procedures will be presented in turn.

(1) Evaluation of Workshop Goals

The eight workshop goals were rated on a four-point scale according to the participants' perceptions of the success of the workshop in attaining those goals. The workshop goals were:

1. Teachers will become sensitive to the problems of disadvantaged students.

2. Teachers will recognize that there is more than one value system for behavior.

3. Teachers will study and plan the application of innovative educational techniques.

4. Teachers will know and be able to use effective instructional methods with the learning needs of slow learners.

5. Teachers will know and follow procedures that will tend to minimize the causes of discipline problems in the classroom.

6. Teachers will study curriculum materials and develop units of instruction which will assist the student to be successful in vocational school.

7. Teachers will cooperate so that a greater relationship is attained between vocational and academic studies.

8. Teachers will be able to write their program objectives behaviorally.

(2) Evaluation of Teaching Staff

The final evaluation also included a section for the participants to evaluate the teaching staff. Five criteria were used, with ratings on a four-point scale, along with space for comments:

1. The knowledge of subject matter, resource information, and subject areas.

2. Methodology used in presentations or working with small groups, individuals or the total group.

3. Planning of the workshop to enable maximum use of participant time in the workshop.

4. An understanding of and sensitivity to the problems of teachers in the workshop.

5. Planning of the workshop to provide for maximum participant involvement.

(3) Evaluation of Consultants

During the course of the workshop, eight consultants were invited to give presentations in their specialties: curriculum planning; innovative techniques in special education; learning packages; reading materials; reading diagnosis; special education; drugs; and sex education.

As soon as possible after the consultant's visit, the participants were given an evaluation form on which they were to rate the consultant on a four-point scale on the following criteria, with space for comments:

1. Knowledge of subject and resource information
2. Methodology of presentation
3. Usefulness to participants

Participants were also to indicate their recommendation (Yes or No) for the consultant if this workshop were held again (space for comment provided).

This data provided useful information for the workshop staff in supplementing some topics and in planning future workshops. Some of the consultants were also interested in receiving the results of their evaluations for their own use.

(4) Overall Workshop Rating

The final evaluation was focused on an overall workshop rating with participants responding to the following items:

1. I would rate the total workshop as: (five-point scale) Excellent, Good, Adequate, Poor, Very Poor

2. I would recommend this workshop to a friend: Yes, No

3. The main reasons for rating the workshop as above, are:

4. The recommendations I would make to improve this type of workshop are:

It is emphasized that the replies to items 3 and 4 above provided helpful information for planning other workshops, i. e., with an indication of the positive aspects of the completed workshop along with suggestions for improving future workshops.

Follow-Up Sessions. A series of eight monthly two-hour meetings was planned and delivered from September through April as a follow-up to the summer workshop. The sessions were held in different vocational schools in Baltimore under the direction of the two university professors from the workshop teaching staff. Participants developed: (1) evaluation procedures to determine if the various behavioral objectives had been met, (2) strategies to implement the instructional procedures developed in the workshop, and (3) means of assistance for those students unable to meet objectives because of special needs, disabilities, or other circumstances.

Summary. This paper addresses the design of a three-week summer workshop for teachers of disadvantaged vocational students in inner-city schools in Baltimore, Maryland. The workshop format is presented as a viable model for use in programs for teachers of at-risk students.

The program features public school and university personnel in cross-discipline planning and delivery; vocational and academic teacher participants; participant-centered teaching methods and curriculum planning; consultants/resource personnel; on-going evaluation; and, follow-up sessions in the schools.

**(Dr. Lowell D. Anderson, formerly of the Department of Industrial Education, University of Maryland, now chair of the Department of Industrial Technology Education, Indiana State University, and Dr. Gardner collaborated in the formulation of the workshop format. Dr. Anderson served as director for the three years he was part of the teaching staff. Dr. Gardner, a staff member for four years, served as director for the last workshop.)*

We Have Met the Enemy, and He is Us

Edward D. Jonas

The Atlanta Public Schools Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program was developed in response to the needs identified through an eight-month research activity. Funded by the Ford Foundation, a major part of the undertaking included interviews with Atlanta Public School (APS) dropouts. This grant required the development of a broad-based diverse group of Atlanta citizens to assess the magnitude/complexity of Atlanta's dropout problem and to develop a responsive plan. As a result of the information gathered through policy review, dropout interviews, discussions with principals, social workers, counselors, and registrars as well as other staff, a multi-pronged dropout prevention and recovery plan was developed. This plan has served as the blueprint for the APS Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program.

One of the cornerstones of the resulting plan developed with consultation by the Atlanta Dropout Prevention Collaborative was the recommendation that APS develop an Office of Dropout Prevention and Recovery. This Office was to be charged with the coordination and management of the APS Dropout Prevention and Recovery activities/program. In addition, this office was to monitor policies, programs, and services in order to identify those activities that are increasing the dropout rate. Further, the collaborative recommended that the following definition of a dropout be adopted by the Atlanta Board of Education:

> *"A dropout is a person who enrolled in the Atlanta Public School System and exited without completing a planned educational program for some reason other than death and who did not transfer to another educational system or program."*

This definition resulted in Policy JQH, which was unanimously adopted by the Atlanta Board of Education in the fall of 1987. This policy, along with the accompanying administrative regulations, provide APS with the first true picture of the magnitude of its dropout problem.

One of the major innovations with the Atlanta Public Schools was the development of the Teen Parent Centers. The first such center was instituted at Carver High School in January of 1989 and the second center is currently being developed at Archer High School. These school-based programs provide participating teen parents with family planning, health education, parenting skills, social, health, education, and day care services. Participants are those teen parents whose high school educations have been interrupted because of day care needs. First-year operations yielded an average increase in attendance and academic performance for the 20 participants.

The recommended Office of Dropout Prevention and Recovery (ODPR) was established within the Department of Pupil Personnel Service in September, 1989. The APS-ODPR was given the responsibility of managing and coordinating the various APS Dropout Prevention/Recovery services. ODPR utilizes, to a large degree, the APS Management Information System (MIS) to monitor attendance and matriculation, as well as behavior and services provided to APS students. Additionally, the MIS is used to monitor compliance with the APS policies/procedures.

In the area of instruction, the ODPR was responsible for developing the proposal for Project STAY. Initially funded by the Georgia Department of Education as an innovative grant program targeting third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders operating in three APS elementary schools, this project is comprised of three components: (1) a thematic, multi-disciplinary instructional component, (2) an effective component which provides a secure, supportive emotional environment; and (3) a social component that provides within-school and out-of-school interaction. This instructional adaptation is predicated on highly structured staff development activities designed to make teachers aware of each of the following:

a. Learning styles and the necessary instruction/environment
b. Development of thematic units
c. Thematic multi-disciplinary instruction
d. Character education

Piloted during the 1989-90 school year, Project STAY during 1990-91 is totally funded by APS. Evaluation results and related documents will permit replication in other APS elementary sites and will be made available for dissemination to other school districts.

The APS Dropout Recovery undertaking Project Try Again is jointly funded by the Atlanta Private Industry Council and APS. Targeting APS dropouts between the ages of 16 and 19, Project Try Again is in its fifth month of operations. To date, a total of 72 students have been recovered. These "second chance" students have been primarily enrolled in the two APS evening schools. However, 18 have been enrolled in one of the APS six alternative schools, five of which are jointly operated by Cities-In-Schools, six have been re-enrolled in day school and 13 in GED programs. Of the students recovered to date, 33 are PIC eligible or pending certification. Seven of the recovered students have been under the age of 16, five of whom are withdrawn from APS schools for non-attendance.

Each of the referenced innovations were necessary because of APS in-action or actions which impacted students and the dropout rate. Though APS was characterized as an innovative school system that forged new linkages with the broader community, there was a lack of action at levels below that of the Superintendent. The Atlanta Dropout Prevention Collaborative represented the first instance where APS opened itself for true community input and criticism. Further it represents truly cooperative and community-based organization. The change in definition and policy JQH resulted from the collaborative's insistence that the purported annual 4.5 percent APS dropout rate was vastly low and thus was not providing a true view of the problem. The teen parent centers were developed in direct response to the reported reason that 80 percent of the interviewed APS female dropouts gave for not being in school. To a person, these young ladies indicated that the lack of day care had prevented them from returning to school. The lack of data regarding at-risk students, services provided, non-attendance; as well as follow-up on dropouts; the need to focus on the dropout problem; and the contributing policies/procedures and/or violations resulted in the formation of APS-OPDR. Though information from external reports as well as interviews of APS dropouts indicated that dropout characteristics began to manifest themselves in grades three and four, no instructional innovations had been attempted to address dropout behaviors of poor grades, non-attendance, discipline, or retention. Project STAY was developed to address these problems in addition to parental support. Project Try Again was implemented in direct response to two facts: massive caseloads (1:2,680) and that APS school social workers were not being made timely aware of who the APS dropouts were. Further, the intensive follow-up and hand holding which was necessary for these students was precluded due to the mammoth responsibilities of APS school social workers.

The projects and innovations described in this abstract are merely samples of activities and projects implemented in the evolution of the APS Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program. Additional programs, projects, activities, procedural and/or policy changes will be developed to meet identified needs. To remain relevant and effective, dropout prevention and recovery programs must be constantly evolving to meet ever emerging and shifting student needs.

One Proven Dropout Prevention Model Adapted to Three Different Delivery Systems

Sandra G. Pritz

The National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University and the Center on Education and Training for Employment at The Ohio State University have joined forces under funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education to demonstrate the viability and relative effectiveness of replicating Project COFFEE, a model dropout prevention program, with enhancement of its components customized to the unique needs of the target population across three diverse settings. The enhanced program has been named Lifelong Options Program. The project was initiated in August, 1989 and will continue through July, 1992.

Three school districts in the southeast where the dropout problem is most serious were selected as demonstration sites. These districts have dropout rates that exceed their respective state averages and that have tended to increase in recent years.

Background

It is estimated that 30 percent of students entering U.S. high schools leave prior to graduation. The failure of such a large number of students to finish high school can have far-reaching negative social and economic implications. The dropout situation in the United States threatens to exacerbate a growing economic problem caused by a serious labor shortage, more jobs requiring higher skill levels, more demand for young workers, and fewer young workers in the labor pool.

Research suggests that one important component of efforts to keep students in schools is vocational education (Weber, 1987; Weber and Mertens, 1987). Vocational education has many of the characteristics deemed important in exemplary dropout prevention programs (Weber 1988). Therefore, this empirical research project is testing the efficacy of integrating the best aspects of vocational education and a proven, compatible dropout reduction program to develop a more powerful, comprehensive curriculum for potential dropouts in vocational schools as well as regular high schools.

Objectives

As stated, the overall purpose of the project is to demonstrate the viability and rela-tive effectiveness of replicating Project COFFEE, a model dropout prevention program, with enhancement of its components customized to the unique needs of the target population across three diverse settings. The objectives are as follows:

- to provide improved vocational education program opportunities with a strong relationship between academic and occupational skills training for at-risk students served in the cooperating sites.
- to strengthen cooperation between public and private employers and the public schools in those sites in an effort to hold students in school through graduation
- to provide more skilled graduates in areas of skill shortages in the participating communities; and
- to gather data-based insights into the basic conditions and constraints that would need to be considered during future efforts to enhance and replicate the model program on a more widespread basis.

Project Sites and Delivery Systems

Three diverse school districts serve as demonstration sites for the program. Each site is uniquely implementing the program based on local needs, policies, resources, and staff. The demonstration sites are the following:

Broward County, Florida, an urban district which is the eighth largest school district in the country. This site is using the school-within-a-school concept at a local technical/vocational center.

Anne Arundel County, Maryland, a suburban school district located in Annapolis, offers during and after-school classes at the Center for Applied Technology, South.

Oconee County, South Carolina, a rural district located in the northwestern section of the state, has established an alternative school. Students attend this school, which the students named OASIS, for their academics and travel to the local career center for their vocational classes.

Methods and Procedures

The project methodology involves a match-to-sample plan. Each cooperating site has matched its existing vocational program with the basic components of the model Project COFFEE, adopting components where they are missing completely and adapting already existing components to enhance their effectiveness. The six components are integrated into the comprehensive program that maximizes students' chances of success in school and beyond. The degree to which the components are implemented as well as the method of implementation varies within each site.

The components include the following:

- *applied academic instruction* — Small classes are conducted so students learn to solve problems common to a variety of occupational areas. In addition to taking courses required for graduation, students may receive accelerated instruction in reading, writing, and math. Computerized instruction and tutoring are being used. Nontraditional credit options allow students to earn credit through community-based education, after-school classes, and cross-course activities.
- *innovative occupational instruction* — This component allows students to acquire skills in an occupational interest area through options such as operating school-based businesses where students sell products or services to the district or community, or on-the-job training in community businesses and industries;
- *intensive counseling* — Students are given access to counselors who provide guidance for personal and career concerns in both planned and spontaneous settings.
- *employability instruction* — Each student receives instruction in how to seek, find, keep, and leave a job through teacher-student interactions and computer-assisted programs. School-community-business partnerships provide a wide range of experiences both in and out of school that broaden students' general cultural knowledge, develop positive work ethics, and expand their understanding of the job market.
- *life-coping instruction* — Students receive help in developing skills that enable them to make decisions, communicate effectively, resolve conflict, develop interpersonal relationships, and set goals.
- *teambuilding and self-esteem activities* — Students experience recreational team activities that enhance self-esteem and appreciation of leisure-time activities useful throughout one's adult life.

The Lifelong Options Program also includes other important components, including assessment and active recruitment of individual students' flexible scheduling; small class size; individualized instruction; tutoring and mentoring; assessment and feedback of student progress; parental involvement; and coordination among components within the program as well as with outside agencies and the business community.

Potential student participants were screened for the project by use of a newly available Dropout Prevention Scale (Weber 1989) developed on the basis of research results identifying a statistically "best" prediction rule. From those identified as significantly at risk for dropout, program and control groups for each district were randomly assigned.

In addition to the Project COFFEE materials and technical assistance from the Centers, the districts have the benefit of computer-networked curricula that provide basic academic skills instruction in a job context and career education. (These have been contributed by the publisher, the Conover Company.) Additional contributions are being made by the site communities; these include company placements for credit-earning internships and student "sponsors" from the local community college.

Evaluation

Formative evaluation of the project is being conducted to assess the degree to which COFFEE components and related enhancement activities are implemented in the cooperating sites. Midcourse adjustments are based on data collected by structured observation of an evaluation specialist on the project staff. Summative evaluation data is being compiled at the Federal level for this project and nine others funded under the same program.

Educational Importance of the Study

By wedding the most recent research-based ideas and practices of vocational education to a tested dropout prevention program, this project provides a common structure across cooperating sites while also allowing flexibility to apply a variety of approaches to meet the unique needs of the target population in each local site. The resulting truly comprehensive dropout prevention program is being tested for potential widespread replication to combat the serious problem of large numbers of students failing to complete high school.

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Language and the At-Risk Learner: A Bridge Over Troubled Water

G. Gene White

Repeated research studies have cited the rigidity of the English curriculum as a major obstacle between the student at risk and a high school diploma. As well as passing the normally rigorous requirements of an English department, most students now have to pass a state mandated basic skills test in both reading and writing. As soon as the gap between the student and success in both of these areas becomes wide enough, whammo, he drops out — with no skills, no diploma, and a low self-concept to boot.

Chosen as Georgia's state lead school in the Center of Excellence Program for students at risk, sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English, Marietta High School has created a program designed to help students survive four years of high school English. Marietta's English department has utilized a variety of internal and external resources that has made passing English and the basic skills test everybody's business — other teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, and students.

The following ten components comprise the at-risk program at Marietta High School:

1. The developmental English Program
2. A basic skills test "push" class
3. The Coordinated Vocational Assistance Education Program
4. A kindergarten tutorial/reading program
5. A peer tutorial program
6. The adopt-a-kid program
7. An ESL "warm-up" program
8. A 64-station computer program
9. A role model speakers' bureau
10. A revised reading program for high interest, ethnic, and anti-drug culture literature

A brief description of each of the 10 components follows. Each of the grade levels at Marietta High (9-12) has a special developmental level English The class number for each of these classes is usually set at 12 to 15 students. The small class size allows teachers to devote personal attention to each student. Specific emphasis is placed on oral reading activities (particularly drama), an intensive writing program especially tailored to the at-risk writer, vocabulary development, and basic skills test preparation. All four of the teachers in the developmental program teach from success-based teaching strategies. Each of the teachers has only one developmental class in the daily schedule.

Completely separate from the developmental English program is the remedial English program. According to state guidelines on remedial education, the students are placed in the program when they have failed either the reading or writing portion of the Georgia Basic Skills Test or have scored at or below the 25th percentile on the nationally normed Iowa Test of Basic Skills. These classes are offered in addition to the developmental English classes and are limited to 12 to 15 students. All of the activities in these classes are individualized to the deficient areas on the student's skills test. MHS currently operates nine such classes on the ninth-and tenth-grade levels. Since failure of the Basic Skills Test is the most detrimental factor in our dropout problem, all efforts are made to help our at-risk students conquer the test.

The real heart of the at-risk program at Marietta High is the Coordinated Vocational Assistance Education Program (CVAE). While the CVAE Program is not a part of the English department, it is tightly connected by an interlocking team consisting of the CVAE coordinator and three developmental teachers in English and math. All students in the at-risk category are routed daily to a special one-hour class for academic, career, and social assistance. One day per week of this class is devoted to language arts assistance. The English interlocking team and the CVAE coordinator meet regularly to design the instruction for that day. The instruction centers around preparation for the Georgia Basic Skills Test and small-group tutorials based on current activities from the students' individual English classes. The CVAE Lab contains computers, a video camera, and other technical equipment. The instruction in the CVAE pro-gram is under constant review as students pass the skills test and improve performance in their English classes. Special attention is given to practical, job-related writing activi-ties.

Within the CVAE Program there is a really unique component that is gaining recognition and one that will hopefully eliminate some of the future at-risk students in our district. When an at-risk student moves into his second year in the CVAE Program and meets satisfactory English class performance requirements, he may opt to participate in the CVAE Tutorial Program which serves designated at-risk students at nearby Westside Elementary School. After meeting with a member of the English department for assistance, the members of the tutorial team create a short language arts lesson suitable for a 15-minute session. The CVAE tutors then go to Westside once a week and deliver their mini-lessons to the at-risk preschoolers. The CVAE students are becoming very competitive in their efforts to be a part of the tutorial team, and the young children at Westside are loving the special attention from the "big kids."

Also connected to the English department is the Peer Tutoring Program sponsored primarily by the counseling department. In this program approximately 40 of the best students at MHS have volunteered 30 minutes per day to devote to tutoring at-risk students. These students often seek the advice of the English department members in determining what the at-risk students need to be doing during the tutorial sessions. The tutorial sessions are arranged to coincide with the students' daily 30-minute study time.

Starting its second year, the MHS Faculty Adopt-A-Kid Program is enjoying success. At the beginning of the school year a list of target students is discretely circulated to the faculty. Each faculty member is encouraged to select an at-risk student that he teaches and fill out the appropriate "adoption papers." The process is silent; the student does not know that the faculty member has made this written commitment to "watch out" for him. The treatments for the students range from a phone call after an absence to an extra help session for an approaching test.

Of the 1,100 students in our school, approximately 80 have limited English proficiency. The foreign language department has also given some input to the at-risk program. The ESL program has gone to an almost total computer-assisted instructional program with excellent interactive software. A system of paired scheduling has also been used in which a new speaker of Spanish, for example, will be given an identical schedule to a Spanish speaker who has been in our school for a longer time. This allows the new student to adapt more easily because he has all of his classes with someone with whom he easily communicates. These students, it must be realized, are not weak academically. They simply are at-risk until they achieve enough proficiency in English to be able to do proficient work in all of their classes. Other solutions and strategies are being considered to give further help to these students.

This year a new 64 station WICAT computer lab is being utilized. All developmental level students are being routed through the lab for instruction that is especially geared for skill improvement. The level of instruction and the time spent in the lab is being studied carefully this year to see if more instructional packages and more time are needed.

One of our school board members has provided a "role model" speakers' bureau to offer positive role models to the kids. Many of the speakers are black professionals who have done well in the community. They are offering advice and the wisdom of their experiences to try to show these kids that education is very important and that there is opportunity for everyone to succeed.

Finally, the English department has finally upgraded and revised its required reading list. This was difficult since the traditional "classics" have always reigned supreme in our curriculum. We have now accepted the fact that some of the "newer" adolescent classics also have literacy value and are worthy of reading and study.

All in all, our program is working. We have failures, but we are having successes as well. The secret to any successful at-risk program, however, is in the fine tuning. Constant review, revision, deletion, and change keep the system revitalized and running smoothly.

The Linguistically At-Risk Student

Richard A. Goodwyn

When most of us hear the term at risk Student, we most frequently think of students having academic problems. The cause may lie in a variety of factors: poor previous preparation, emotional and/or family problems, environmental or social/cultural pressures, chemical dependence or recovery, or a combination of any or all of the factors mentioned.

There is, however, another group of at-risk students who are not only not academically deficient but who frequently perform at an elevated level; just not in English. These students have been uprooted for various reasons from an academic environment in which they have been performing very adequately and are now placed in a sort of double-bind situation.

On the postsecondary level the problem is being addressed by intensive language institutes and well-staffed ESOL programs which offer the student the opportunity to achieve a level of communication in English prior to taking content courses. Thus, the students have a better chance to meet successfully the goals, objectives, and requirements of the program. At the public-school level, the number of these students is increasing rapidly. In a speech last Spring at the Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics, Rita Esquivel, the Director of the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs at the U.S. Department of Education stated some projections that stagger the imagination. This department projects that by the year 2000, half of the student population in the public schools of 50 major cities in the U.S. will be English-subordinate and that by the year 2010, 50 percent of the public school population in the United States will live in a nonEnglish dominant home. How are we prepared to cope with this situation?

Students in the ESL classes often develop coping strategies to acquire a minimal communicative level in social situations. However, when these students are mainstreamed into an all-English curriculum, they encounter severe difficulties with the academic program. Researchers have found that the development of academic language skills lags behind the development of social communicative skills, often by as much as 5 to 7 years (Cummins, 1983, 1984; Saville-Troike, 1984).

A study on the *Age and Rate of Acquisition of Second Language for Academic Purposes,* (Collier, 1987) found that limited English proficient (LEP) students who enter all-English academic classes between the ages of 8 and 11 take two to five years to reach the 50th percentile on national norms. Students who entered between the ages of 12 to 15 years old, were projected to require as mush as six to eight years to reach grade-level norms in academic achievement when schooled in the second language. A group of 5 to 7-year-old students was also studied. They achieved at a faster rate than the 12-15 year-old age group but not as rapidly as those 8-11. These data seem to imply that an additional two-year period of cognitive development in L1 would be of benefit and so would support for bilingual instruction in the early grades.

Elementary systems have a bilingual possibility which permits a gradual change over to English-only instruction while maintaining forward progress through the academic content. Large secondary systems have established programs, magnet schools, international schools, and other courses of study which allow the English-deficient (ED) or limited-English student to acquire at least a minimal level of communication prior to entry in regular academic classes.

It's not that nothing is being done. In fact, much is being done in selected situations. The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) is an established and working program designed for LEP students on the elementary and secondary levels who are moving from the intermediate or advances ESL classes into the mainstream of all English content instruction (Chalmot & O'Malley, 1987). This approach helps the students develop learning strategies to facilitate the transition from the socially communicative to the academically communicative linguistic levels. It does very little or nothing for the academic advancement of students who have no communicative ability in English.

Traditionally the LEP immigrant population has settled in the central districts of large urban areas where there is an established nucleus of support, moving to the suburbs after successful assimilation. Recently, the trend seems to be shifting. More and more these workers, although they lack even socially communicative skills, are moving to the suburbs where there are more job opportunities.

There are many smaller school systems which are now faced with or are beginning to encounter students with the same need, but which do not have the resources to deal with the problem in the detail that it demands. Another reason for this attitude is that only a small percentage of the population is effected; thus, little attention is given to the solution.

In order to see just one of the many situations in small and/or isolated schools, a brief picture of the situation in my school would be illustrative. Marietta High School is the only high school of a school system located in the Atlanta metropolitan area. The 85 non-English speaking students represent only about 8 percent of the student population. (In the system, there are about 265 non-English speaking students which represent about 5 percent overall. Last week our school registered 5 students who speak not one word of English in social situa-tions, much less are they academically proficient.) Our one ESL teacher serves both the elementary and secondary schools. Students who are LEP or ED are placed in this class for 55 minutes per day. What you might ask, are we doing with them for the other 5 periods? They are in regular (although developmental) classes of English, history, biology, and math. They are not linguistically ready for academic courses, but we have nothing else to do with them. These might as well be AP classes. What are we doing to solve this problem and to facilitate the assimilation of these students into our school community? How do we plan to assure the opportunity for these students to be academic successes rather than a dropout statistic?

A working committee of volunteers, teachers and counselors has been formed to determine what short-term solutions are possible given the resources already in place. Also we are looking at long-term plans to place the student in the academic environment as rapidly as possible with the highest possible chance for success.

The PTA has purchased for each student a dictionary that translates his or her language to and from English. These LED and Ed students will be placed into a special homeroom until graduation. It forms the nucleus of a student help group in which students act as peer advisors to new students who enter the program. An after-school tutoring program is being formed which will give the students an opportunity to come two or three days a week to ask questions and get extra help.

To illustrate the situation, take the case of a Korean student who arrived fresh from Korea. Although she spoke not one word of English, she was placed in English, American history, math, and a science. Her teachers report that she takes every assignment and test, translates every question into Korean, answers them, and then retranslates the answers into English. She still makes A's and B's. She has a high absence rate, partly because she can't keep up this pace an a daily basis and partly because she is the only driver in her family and she is responsible for everyone's transportation to work.

This is an exceptional student who will succeed in spite of the tremendously demanding, if not almost impossible, situation. What about those in the same situation who don't have her exceptional drive and determination not to fail? What will happen to them? Will they become another dropout statistic? Will we refer to them with the tired old cliche as one of those who "dropped through the cracks?" When they finally give up, who really deserves the F?

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Defusing the Angry Student — Specific Suggestions to Use With Difficult Students

Joy Okoniewski Allen

The at-risk student is usually motivated by the immediate world around him. "Roller-coaster" lifestyles with extreme highs and lows often influence the day-to-day behaviors seen in the classroom. Therefore, as teachers and administrators, the approach we use in dealing with these students is crucial to our success and effectiveness.

We begin by understanding that we are not responsible for students' behaviors but rather we are responsible for providing appropriate behavior choices and avenues for success. We are also responsible for finding alternative approaches in education when those in use aren't working. The first step is finding out what does and does not work for each student in each particular setting, adjusting strategies and continually searching for more effective practices. The next step is to understand what motivates these students. How do they think? What do they fear? These are complicated students with lots of baggage. Why do they act out? When we focus on these questions rather than the countless negative actions of individuals, we achieve our first objective which is to understand what motivates the at-risk student. With this insight, our goal of providing lifelong learning avenues is more clearly defined.

It is important to remember that we cannot expect 100 percent success. Some students will choose not to accept our alternative options at that time. Even though it is difficult, we may need to let those students leave our program and hope they will return at a later date. We then avoid building up our own frustration level to where an angry conflict could be triggered easily. If our investment is too high, we are probably taking on ownership of a student's problems. This in turn hinders the student from being responsible for his/her own actions and creates hostility on both sides. The disappointment and possible anger of the educator will only fuel the student's disapproval and blaming of someone else for the situation. We cannot allow the student to use educators as a convenient scapegoat.

Most of the time, intense anger comes from within the student and is not the direct consequence of a specific classroom occurrence. Knowing this, the adult in control may want to use a different strategy in confronting a behavioral problem. The approach should sincerely address the anger, rather than solely addressing the negative occurrence. This also allows time for both parties to cool down and objectively look at behaviors which are acceptable and behaviors which are not acceptable. Offering this opportunity to look at the anger, the behavior, and the outcome collectively begins the lifelong process of understanding oneself and accepting ownership of problems.

In our enthusiasm to encourage and motivate students, it is also possible to help too much. We cannot remind ourselves enough that our obligation is to provide avenues, not to "force" change even with the best of intentions. If we are trying too hard to convince another of change, the investment becomes ours rather than the student's investment, and our original objective is lost. Once again, anger can be justified on the part of the student because we open ourselves to blame when we accept the investment as ours. Even if we know a better way and we know the likely outcome of a poor decision, the student must be free to choose his avenue, be it right or wrong. If the decision does not work out for the student, then she/he can analyze the results without focusing on blame and anger toward the educator.

Another important consideration is people's attitudes toward at-risk students. Many adults believe that adolescents who are continually getting into trouble and making poor decisions are choosing to do so. Sadly, some adults even convince themselves that the adolescents' misbehavior actually invites and justifies mental or physical abuse in order to teach a lesson! Unfortunately, many of our at-risk students have experienced mental, physical and/or sexual misbehaviors. There is rationale to this way of thinking. We do not choose misconduct in order to obtain some form of abuse.

No human being, not even our disruptive adolescent, gets up in the morning, looks in the mirror and says "OK Self, let's see how bad I can be today. Let's see how many teachers I can aggravate. I'll achieve nothing today because I strive to be a zero. And tomorrow, I'll wake up and do the same thing over again. Yeah!"

Now look at the absurdity of this. Can any of us intentionally strive to be nothing but a waste? Yet why do we hear over and over again "She/he wants to be bad. She/he chooses to be a jerk and get into trouble. She/he knows right from wrong?"

If we are going to be involved in education, we must be able to go beyond this train of thought and help other adults to do the same. We must help people realize that inappropriate behaviors are consequences of bad feelings, low self-esteem, and little confidence. It's also possible that the role models in the lives of these students don't resemble the image we are trying to create. Therefore, we need to understand at-risk student behavior and be able to calmly respond to their anger with compassion. When students see our compassion and willingness to listen, much of their anger will subside enough to discuss possible alternatives or even consequences.

Another suggestion is targeted for the teachers inside the classroom. The at-risk student frequently complains about our lessons and classwork. For most, the material is boring and does not appear useful for their daily lives. We have found that this is especially true in the classes where teachers' objectives are focused on Bloom's "knowledge" and "comprehension" levels of complexity. The at-risk student not only has trouble memorizing information to repeat and paraphrase, but she/he sees little value in the effort. Therefore, it is easier to make fun of the work and not try rather than understand that the value will come at the higher stages. If the lessons are geared toward the higher levels right from the start, many at-risk students will be less threatened to join in. That's because at Bloom's higher levels of application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, the student can afford to try because 'right' and 'wrong' are less concrete. Students can draw on their creative talents to formulate answers and the assignment may even appear more rewarding and practical. They challenge knowledge and comprehension levels on their own to collect the data needed to complete the assignment. Administrators wanting to encourage their teachers to use the higher levels may want to copy Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain defining the levels of complexity and provide the verbs in behavior terms for teachers to use in formulating objectives.

My experience from developing and serving as a teaching principal of an alternative high school has allowed me to compile the following list of suggestions which have worked in our setting.

Suggestions/Possibilities to use with Difficult Students

1. Take care of yourself — you need to survive and thrive personally.
2. Remember, students are responsible for their own behaviors.
3. Try to understand what motivates the at-risk student.
4. Deal with one specific behavior at a time and not the whole personality.
5. Allow yourself to enjoy the small chunks of success and count each one.
6. Provide opportunities for students to "belong," to feel special in some way.
7. Challenge students so that learning must occur — boredom invites problems.
8. Encourage students to "contribute" in and out of the classroom. Ask for help.
9. Give directions — don't assume they see the obvious.
10. Allow the student time during a confrontation to cool down/gain control.
11. Remember that the student's anger is with himself and you're the outlet.
12. Offer choices during a confrontation and continue with the lesson.
13. Avoid a "public show" where adult and student need to prove a win.
14. Have high expectations so that excellence and appropriateness is the norm.
15. Have positive expectations to get rid of at-risk student stereotypes.
16. Catch students doing something right often

and make note of it.

17. Avoid coming up with quick answers/solutions. Say "I need time. See me at . . ."
18. Allow students ownership of their problems, behaviors, and consequences.
19. Accept mistakes and remember that we all make poor decisions sometimes.
20. Alternative discipline practices are hard work but very effective.
21. Humor is needed and works with difficult students.
22. Bring out the best in a student when you can. Nobody is difficult all the time.
23. Students learn in different ways, so allow for alternatives and hands-on work.
24. Take time to explain the logic of a request rather than to simply demand it.
25. Let your human side show. Getting tough isn't the answer. They've seen tougher.
26. Learn feedback skills such as "I know you'll come up with a solution."
27. Allow freedom within limits.
28. Value what you preach.
29. Practice "active" discipline rather than "reactive" discipline.
30. Encourage self-reliance.
31. Form objectives to higher levels of learning (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).
32. Encourage parents to work with schools in designing avenues for their child.

These are a few ideas which may be of use to those individuals working with the at-risk student. The way we approach these youths and the way we deliver our messages will determine how much we will accomplish. We know that we really need to treat all students the way we would want to be treated ourselves! Anger can be defused when we change and add a few components in our delivery systems.

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Pella Community School — At-Risk Program

P.A.R.

Janine VanVark

Currently there is a state and national effort to provide programs for students who are at risk of "dropping out." The existing school programs are having difficulty meeting the social, emotional, psychological and academic needs of these at-risk students.

The Prevention and Retention (P.A.R.) program of Pella Community is designed to hire persons with educational backgrounds who will work with students, teachers, parents, and administrators to improve communications between home and school and to develop mutual understandings among the parties.

In 1988 there was a large number of students living in family settings other than those of the original biological parents. Although there are no definite figures, it is estimated to be at about 30 percent of elementary school children in the community.

Over a five-year period, approximately 51 students have dropped out at Pella Community High School. An increasing number of students are living in unsettled home situations. The interferences caused by the emotional stress in many families make it very difficult for students to attend to learning in school, to have tolerance for age-mates, and to maintain the appropriate self-concept and self-discipline required to cope with life and school.

The justification for the project is that the money spent in this program for communication and cooperation in the early school years will help with student success in school, build a support base at home, and diminish subsequent learning problems in junior and senior high.

The 1989-90 school year will offer numerous challenges for Janine VanVark, elementary P.A.R. Coordinator, and George Wares, high school P.A.R. Coordinator. A part-time middle school coordinator will be added by fall.

The elementary P.A.R. coordinator will work with approximately 25 students and their parents. These students will develop and improve their self-esteem and social skills and achieve academic success. P.A.R. students will be helped to cope with and accept the home situation and develop the skill of adjusting to conditions they cannot change. We hope this will decrease emotional tension and develop more acceptable behavior at school.

The elementary P.A.R. coordinator will go into the home of all elementary students that she will be seeing on a regular basis. The coordinator will meet with parents and explain the purpose of the coordinator/student sessions. The coordinator will encourage parent participation. Parents will comprehend the school's position and goals, fostering cooperation between home and school. Parents will develop a better understanding of child development and parenting skills which will further enable them to be supportive and helpful. Specific parenting classes shall be added as the program develops.

The high School P.A.R. Coordinator will be identifying potential dropouts in several ways. Students with one or more of the following characteristics may become a candidate for the program: chronic attendance problems, disenfranchisement from the school setting, poor social functioning skills, credit deficiency, exclusion from special education programs, two or more years below grade level in a basic subject, and limited participation in co-curricular activities.

High school potential dropouts must meet all Pella High School graduation requirements. These students may be scheduled into the learning center during their regular study hall periods for monitoring, counseling, and tutoring. Additionally, students will be required to complete a one semester life skills course. The life skills course will include the study of self-concept, study skills, social skills, sexual awareness, family issues, decision-making, communications, budget management, and stress management.

Returning high school dropouts will follow an adjusted curriculum. Adjustments may consist of shortened school days, correspondence courses, work-study credit, and alternate courses. These students will also enroll in the life skills course for credit. The total number of credits required for all students will be required of these students as well. Students will be subject to all school rules.

Objectives for personal and social development will include the following: (1) attending school regularly, (2) accepting responsibility and consequences for their behavior, (3) developing and recognize the importance of self-discipline, (4) dealing with authority figures and their peers, (5) developing a positive self-image, effectively participating in school activities, (6) recognizing their roles in their families, and (7) developing effective communication techniques with their family, peers, and school staff.

Teachers will receive in-service training on the nature of the P.A.R. programs.

The Pella Community School District will implement the program during the 1989-90 school year. Educators from other school districts and community members are welcomed to visit the program/counselors at any time. The Elementary coordinator, high school coordinator, and administrators will be open and willing to visit with any interested school districts.

Comprehensive At-Risk Education Making A Difference in Children's Lives

Kenneth Watson

Program Design

The purposes of the Comprehensive At-Risk Education (CARE) project for Johnsonville Middle School are to provide intensive instruction in the basic skills areas for at-risk students, provide instruction and hands-on experiences in the area of career awareness for at-risk students, and provide incentives for these students to stay in school.

Activities/strategies to accomplish these goals are the following:

(1) placement of all at-risk students in intensive reading, writing, and math classes according to the above information for at least two periods per day in addition to regular reading and math classes. Material will be vocationally-oriented.
(2) placement of all at-risk students in a career awareness course for the remaining two periods according to the following curriculum: 6th grade — instruction on the availability and requirement of different careers. 7th grade — pre-vocational classes where basic manual skills are taught in the shop (and home economics room when available). 8th grade — pre-vocational classes where advanced skills are taught in the shop (and home economics rooms when available). A work-study mini-course will be arranged with local businesses.

The population to be served will be the following:

1) students at least one grade level behind their peers,
(2) students below standard on CTBS and BSAP,
(3) students performing poorly in coursework,
(4) students with poor attendance habits,
(5) students with continuous disciplinary referrals, and
(6) students identified as being at-risk by all of their teachers.

Any or all of these conditions may apply.

The expected outcomes are the following:

(1) 95 percent of the students in the program will remain in school through the 10th grade,
(2) 100 percent of these students who remain in school through the 10th grade will enroll in vocational training at the high school level,
(3) office referrals on these students will decrease by 50 percent,
(4) standardized test scores for these students will increase 10 percent,
(5) grades on coursework will increase by 25 percent, and
(6) attendance of these students will increase by 5 percent.

Program Delivery

By June 1, 1990, all at-risk students in grade 6-8 at Johnsonville Middle School will be identified by analysis of test scores, permanent records, and teacher referrals. Parents of these students will be notified of the program, its purpose and objectives, and their child's eligibility. Each year thereafter, eligible students will be notified again.

Before August 1, 1990, one career instructor will be hired to teach career awareness and vocational skills. Another teacher will be hired to provide intensive remediation to these students in the basic skills area. These two teachers will teach the at-risk students two-thirds of the school day. The students will be taught by a regular reading and math teacher the other third of the day.

Requisition and purchase of equipment, materials, and learning aids will begin prior to August 1, 1990. All required equipment and materials will be purchased by September, 1990. One-hundred percent of the shop and home living equipment will be purchased by June 1, 1991. Fifteen computers and software will be purchased by August 1, 1990. All instructional materials and equipment needed will be purchased by August of each year. There may be a need to purchase a mobile classroom before the program starts.

Students enrolled in the program will attend career awareness classes two periods per day. While in these classes, the students will receive instruction on requirements for these jobs. They will begin learning basic manual skills necessary for vocational classes in high school. They also will receive instruction in home living skills. These classes will be coordinated with the regular reading and math classes to emphasize the necessity of these skills in vocational areas.

The remediation teacher will provide instruction in the basic skills areas. These skills will be directly related to vocational skills. Pupil-teacher ratio will not exceed 2 to 1 at any given time.

The guidance department will provide support for the program by conducting small-group sessions on social skills and staying in school. Six workshops will be provided for all students.

Eighth-grade students will participate in a work-study program with local businesses during the last semester. There may be a need to provide transportation to these sites.

At the end of each year, an evaluation will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the program and its personnel.

The Three-Way At-Risk Debate: Alternative School vs. School-Within-A-School vs. Mainstreaming

Mary Ann Gesse and Karen Ehrle

The term at risk, once perceived as a student stereotype and now determined to be a complex academic and social phenomenon, applies to a diverse student population. Various combinations of health, social, family and academic difficulties affect adolescent behavior and achievement. While schools are generally unable to find actual solutions to the vast array of student problems, it is possible to create educational settings suitable for troubled youth to find success and learn.

Waukesha, Wisconsin's urban school system has created three programs for potential dropouts. Each represents a distinctly different educational approach to a unique subset of at-risk problems.

- The five-year-old self-contained alternative school for 15-25 pregnant teens is a collaborative effort of human services, county health department, the local vocational college and the public schools. Students are given privacy in a dignified setting suitable for decision making, career planning and learning appropriate to the special needs of pregnant teens and teen parents.

- The School-Within-A-School approach has been in operation in the Waukesha Schools for the past two years and offers a self-contained option within the regular education setting. Students who are 17 years of age and severely credit deficient may qualify to participate in this competency-based alternative. Upon successful completion of one year of study which includes full daily participation and completion of academic area competencies, students can receive a Waukesha Alternative High School Diploma.

- TRY (Take Responsibility for Yourself) is an at-risk mainstreaming program operating in the three Waukesha junior highs and both high schools. Volunteer students are programmed into regular classes but use the TRY room during study halls and free time for tutoring and counseling. While students become academically engaged and socially bonded within the program, they are urged into full school membership through extra-curricular projects and activities. Equally important is full faculty participation and responsibility for these students' success in classes.

The presenters intend to describe a continuum of services which attempts to offer support within the least restrictive environment. We hope to utilize program description, case studies, and a small group activity to articulate the nature of these options for students. A short slide show will allow participants to visualize the three settings.

Presenters Mary Ann Getse and Karen Ehrle have devoted 15 and 11 years respectively to professional work with troubled youth, including several years as Waukesha School District employees. Additionally, each is a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee studying the social and educational issues related to at-risk adolescents.

Mary Ann, a social worker, participated in the development of the TRY program and is currently preparing a qualitative study of the School-Within-A-School. Presently she coordinates social work services at the School Age Parent Program and is active in the planning of an extended program for teen fathers and mothers.

Karen taught five years in the Milwaukee Public Schools, created a living skills program for adjudicated adolescents, developed the Waukesha JTPA program for teen parents and is in her third year as coordinator of the TRY group at Waukesha North High School.

Section Five

Strategies and Programs for Involving At-Risk Youth

Without a doubt, one of the most important problems facing educators as we move into the 21st Century will be the staggering increase in students at risk. As more and more school systems across the country come to terms with this issue, strategies will have to be created and identified to rescue the potential at-risk student. The abstracts contained in this section are an attempt to identify some proven ideas and methods that may lead to the increased educational progress for those learners in danger of dropping out of school for a variety of at-risk issues. Particular emphasis in many of the articles that follow is placed on building self-esteem, motivation, and teaching strategies that can play a key role in the success rate of the at-risk student.

The basic foundation for any strategy used to bolster academic prowess has to come from within the students themselves. Probably the strongest determiner of student success is how students feel about themselves. If a child grows up thinking he/she will be a failure, chances are the "self-fulfilling prophecy" syndrome will be the greater influence. This particularly holds true in many poverty ridden areas where dropping out of school has become the norm. So, the first step to improving at-risk student performance is to break the vicious cycle of negativity that surrounds the student.

A key to any student's success can be found from within the student's perception of himself. Many feel that while this may be true, motivation is another extremely important component that promotes an increase in student achievement. The common argument forwarded by this group is that no matter how students feel about themselves, if they are not motivated to achieve they are simply going to be bypassed and thus doomed to fail. Motivation can be achieved with clearly stated and implemented strategies.

The secret to those efforts for increasing motivation in students is to convince students that they control their own destiny with their actions. When they believe this, then it makes it easier for them to push towards achievement. Thus, what researchers actually see is that when students possess positive self-esteem, the motivation necessary to perform well can be instilled with positive methods of instruction.

A final idea is raising the expectation level of low achieving students. Educators, to accomplish this, must consider the differences of learners. Schools should consider: A) using team learning/more temporary ability grouped arrangements, B) integrating supplementary assistance such as Chapter 1 instruction, and C) maximizing individual help to low achieving students. Once teachers expect more from their students, then the achievement levels will climb. Teachers and schools must first, therefore, raise their own expectations. The old conventional wisdom that at-risk students fail because they are a product of an uncaring society is obsolete. Educators must adopt new directions for educating the low level learner.

Although the following equation is hardly a panacea for curing all of the ills pertaining to educating the at-risk child, it is at least a foundation upon which to build on.

Positive self-esteem plus motivation plus refined teaching strategies equal higher at-risk student performance.

The ESOL/Bilingual Counselor in Montgomery County Public Schools: A Multidimensional Role

Rosemarie Dapena, Rosana Gatti and Vilma Y. Nadal

The ESOL/Bilingual Program was implemented in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) in 1967. This program was offered to the diversified educational and cultural needs of a student population whose native language is not English and who does not speak English well enough to do regular classwork. MCPS serves students from 112 countries, grades K through 12; there are 82 different languages spoken; and the ESOL students comprise 5.6 percent of the total school population.

ESOL offers diversified services: a) instruction in the English language and other subjects for students with limited English proficiency; b) the Multidisciplinary Educational Training and Support (METS) program for students grades 3-8 who have experienced an interruption in their schooling or who have had no schooling in their countries; c) the Bilingual Career Education Program (BiCEP), a vocational program designed for high school students who are at high risk of dropping out.

ESOL students come from a variety of cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic and academic backgrounds. The profile has changed dramatically in the past few years. Currently many ESOL students are the children of refugees or recently arrived immigrants.

The lives of these students are characterized by many losses: loved ones, extended family, a familiar environment (language, communication patterns, the acceptance of culturally appropriate behaviors, etc). Due to their past experiences, these students are facing complex identity issues in addition to the acculturation process.

The role of the ESOL/Bilingual counselor at MCPS is a multidimensional one. It calls for sensitivity and flexibility in dealing with and meeting this population's unique needs. Among the goals are the following: to facilitate the acculturation process; to help the students adjust to the new culture while still preserving the values of their own culture; to assist in resolving conflicts arising from cross-cultural misunderstandings; and to help school counselors and teachers understand the needs of the limited English proficient students.

The ESOL/Bilingual counseling program provides counseling services for these students from a cross-cultural perspective. MCPS has a unique program of multicultural counseling. There is a team of nine counselors: five Hispanics and four Asians. These counselors are based at the same office, are assigned schools to visit on a regular basis, and work in collaboration with school counselors, teachers and parents. Culturally appropriate materials and strategies have been developed, adapted to grade and English proficiency, and implemented to deliver these services to this at-risk population.

Artwork can serve as a powerful and effective counseling tool when working with youth at risk, as well as with a cross-cultural population. One of the bilingual counselors, a trained art therapist, has introduced this modality to our program. Art transcends language barriers because it is a non-verbal medium and the symbols are universal. Therefore, the students can express themselves freely.

The artwork can facilitate the expression of the many traumatic events (sexual abuse, war, poverty, etc.) many of our students have experienced. Verbal expression of these feelings can often be difficult due to the nature of the traumatic event or the limited proficiency in English. Through the artwork a counselor is able to ascertain a wealth of information about the child (developmental level, self-esteem, areas of conflict, etc.) from the drawings. Self-expression with art material can serve the following functions: 1) provide an opportunity for the student to openly share something about himself or herself in a non-verbal manner; 2) foster feelings of positive self-esteem by allowing the student to engage and complete artwork; and 3) build a working alliance and engender a trusting relationship in a non-verbal fashion. The art component in counseling students has proven to be successful in meeting the above objectives.

ESOL/Bilingual counselors are mediators between cultures with the understanding that emerges from personal experiences in cultural adaptation. The high level of school desertion and teenage pregnancy, as well as the physical, emotional and sexual abuse occurring within the ESOL population, creates areas of stress, desolation and loss for the ESOL students.

The ESOL student encounters an ambivalence between the family demands and school expectations. Often, though not always, the ESOL parent has had little schooling. This removes the home support for completion of the fundamental 12 years of schooling, even more the continuing of higher education. The interest in acquiring the high school diploma is lessened by the need of an additional financial support provided by the work age student within the family.

Early pregnancy and single parenting within our female ESOL population presents itself as a major problem. School completion, healthy physical and emotional development of the mother, as well as the socioeconomic stability of the new family, demands additional support, guidance and counseling.

Disciplining is among the strongest factors within a culture that faces confrontation in the process of acculturation. The ESOL/Bilingual student faces the conflict of living within the home and school culture. Also, this student presents the need for support in the development of his/her cultural adaptation.

The role of the ESOL/Bilingual counselors in Montgomery County Public Schools is multidimensional. They are mediators among cultures. Their ultimate aim is to help the students attain the self-fulfillment entitled to all human beings. For that, an effective counseling model has been developed to serve this highly demanding and diverse population.

Our case studies reflect the multidimensional role of the ESOL/Bilingual counselor. As a cross-cultural counselor, bilingualism and biculturalism are among his/her most salient skills. The goal of cross-cultural counseling in MCPS is to help ESOL students in the process of adjustment to the new culture while preserving the values of their own culture.

In these endeavors, processes such as cultural shock and acculturation are critical issues. Often, during crucial moments, the cross-cultural counselor facilitates understanding and awareness aiming to identify coping behaviors for situations that are new to the students and that are concomitant to the migration process.

Consequently, the role of the counselor varies as the counseling goals change. From counselor to therapist, to case manager, and/or to social worker, the counselor functions as a catalyst in the difficult and subjective attempts of adjusting to a new language and culture.

Compared with traditional counseling techniques, cross-cultural strategies may appear as non-conventional and overwhelming to the anglo counselor. The issues of rapport vs. dependency, distance vs. self-disclosure, and frequency of counseling contacts are factors that define the complexity of the role of the ESOL/Bilingual counselor.

Project GOAL

Keenan High Scool, Columbia, S.C.: Guided Opportunities for Achievement in Life

Denise C. Collier, Cynthia W. Curtis and Betty J. Lark

During the 1988-89 school term at W. J. Keenan High School, 54 students dropped out of school. There were also 115 ninth- and 86 eleventh-graders who failed to pass the Basic Skills Assessment Program (BSAP). Furthermore, 12 percent of the students had repeated one or more grades.

As a result of the above problems the guidance staff felt that two additional staff members were needed to address the individual students' problems. Funding sources were therefore contacted.

The South Carolina Department of Education provided a three-year state grant to W. J. Keenan High School through the Target 2000 education reform program. The program was implemented on March 2, 1990, and served 95 students during the remainder of the 1989-90 school year. One hundred students are in the program for 1990-91 school year. Project GOAL (Guided Opportunities to Achievement in Life) was the name given for this program.

Students were invited to participate in Project GOAL on a voluntary basis upon referrals by a guidance counselor, administrator, teacher, or parent. They must have one or more of the following characteristics in order to be a member:

1. Failed to pass the BSAP examination
2. Have been or are pregnant
3. Retained at least one grade level
4. Chronic attendance problems
5. Involvement in drug-related activities
6. Families are experiencing economic difficulties which cause problems for the student in school
7. Discipline problems
8. Chronic health problems
9. Law-related problems

As the Project GOAL staff began to work with each student, there were three goals that we tried to accomplish:

1. To prevent potential dropouts from leaving school by providing needed support and resources.
2. To improve the total environment and overall functioning of the student.
3. To improve the basic skills of the student.

Activities of Project GOAL

In order to meet the needs of the students, the following activities were scheduled:

- Computer-assisted instruction
- Providing mentors from the business community
- Job placement programs
- Career awareness programs
- Home visits
- Involving parents in the development of the students' individual intervention plans
- Site visits to local colleges and technical schools
- On-going tutorial sessions in the areas of English, Reading, and Math
- Providing transportation to appointments
- Viewing of educational tapes
- Recognition of the Most Improved Students at the Awards Day Ceremony
- Student conferences
- SAT Preparation classes
- Survival Skills classes
- Field trips for students, parents, and mentors

Accomplishments During the 1989-90 School Year

As a result of the support received and the numerous activities of our program, several improvements occurred:

1. Tutorial Program

The after-school tutorial program began on March 12, 1990 and ended on May 24, 1990. Thirty-two students were actively involved in one or more of the classes. Four classes were offered during each week. There was one English class on Mondays and Wednesdays, and another session on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reading was studied on Tuesdays and Math was taught on Wednesdays. Each class was held from 3:30 p.m. until 5 p.m. at W. J. Keenan High School.

The BASE (Basic Academic Skills for Employment) Remediation software program was utilized during the tutorial program. BASE contained lessons, quizzes, and tests in the following fifteen subject areas:

Reading -	Reading comprehension Vocabulary Word Knowledge
Language -	Grammar and Usage Spelling Punctuation Capitalization
Mathematics -	Computation Concepts Word Problems Introduction to Algebra & Geometry
Writing -	Language Mechanics Language Usage Sentences

English Class - Monday/Wednesday sessions

Scores of the students improved from 71.2 percent to 73.6 percent

English Class - Tuesday/Thursday sessions

Scores of the students improved from 66.1 percent to 67.4 percent

Math Class

Scores of the students improved from 56.6 percent to 57.8 percent

Reading Class

Scores of the students improved from 33.1 percent to 48.0 percent

2. Prenatal/Postnatal Services

Sixteen students who had been or were pregnant were served by Project GOAL during the 1989-90 school term. Of the 16 students, seven of them (43 percent) were pregnant at the time of the referral.

A description of the services provided to the pregnant teens will be given: (a) All seven students (100 percent) engaged in individual counseling with the Project Director, (b) All seven of the students (100 percent) received assistance with coordinating day care arrangements. Three of the females (43 percent) arranged for family members to care for their child, and the other four (57 percent) needed child care to be provided by a day care center. Project Director contacted Richland County Department of Social Services and arranged for care to be provided under Title XX funding at a cost of $1 per week for students desiring this assistance, (c) All seven students (100 percent) received prenatal care. Project Director and the Assistant/Secretary provided transportation to appointments, if needed, (d) Six of the seven females (85 percent) made application for WIC (Women, Infant, and Children) and Medicaid services. The remaining student has been encouraged to apply immediately, and (e) three of the seven students (43 percent) were interested in the prenatal classes offered by the Atlas Road Learning Center. Transportation was provided to these sessions by the Project GOAL van.

The services provided to the nine teenage mothers are as follows: (a) Five of the nine females (56 percent) were involved in the afterschool tutorial program, (b) three of the students (33 percent) had not made application for AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and Medicaid services, and (c) All seven students (100 percent) received instruction on career planning and were involved in related activities (i.e., field trips, career awareness programs, etc.). Individual counseling was also provided on a regular basis.

3. Suspensions and Expulsions

Project Director obtained records from the Student Affairs Office in an effort to count the number of suspensions and expulsions received by the students of Project GOAL. Manual tabulation occurred.

During the 1988-89 school year, 40 of Project GOAL's students (42 percent) were suspended due to fighting, profanity, cutting class, etc. The suspension rate decreased to 32 students (34 percent) for the 1989-90 school year. The average number of days given for suspensions during 1989-90 was three. Ten of Project GOAL's students (11 percent) were expelled during the 1988-89 school year. Six expulsions (6 percent) occurred during the 1989-90 school year.

4. Employment

In order to determine the number of students that were interested in afterschool or summer employment, the Project Director interviewed all students 16 years and older. Sixteen students were presently working and did not need assistance. Twenty-one students, however, were interested in job placement. Project Director was successful in locating job training programs for 17 of the 21 students (81 percent). The following agencies were utilized as resources:

1. Columbia Urban League
2. South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department
3. Opportunities Industrialization Center
4. Fluor Daniels Construction

5. Parental Involvement

After interviewing the students of Project GOAL, Project Director made an effort to schedule conferences with all parents in order to discuss the Individual Intervention Plan (IIP) for the pupils. Eighty-eight percent (88 percent) of the parents were able to discuss the IIPs during the scheduled conferences, home visits, or by telephone.

Conclusions

Even though Project GOAL has been in operation for a short period, several significant changes have been observed. It is hoped that the program will continue to be successful.

100 Percent in Caps and Gowns
Aurora Public Schools

Jane E. Pollock and Joseph LoVerde

One hundred percent in Caps and Gowns is a lofty goal for a school district of 25,000 students. Sounds admirable? Sure. Realistic? Probably not. So, why would a district use a 100 percent graduate rate as its goal?

To a great extent, attitude determines predictable success for an individual or an organization. In challenging the problem of students at risk at Aurora Public Schools, we asked questions in such a way that led us to positive change. We did not ask, "Why are we a district that has such a dropout rate?" Instead, we phrased our investigation with proactive questions:

> "How can we provide services so that all of our students will complete our program?"
>
> "What kinds of alternatives do we need to provide for our students to succeed?"
>
> "Where should we restructure to meet the needs of our community of students?"

Asking questions that endorse action versus rumination was one of the key components in our preparation to improve our graduate rate. We decided to do something, not to talk about it.

In 1988 our high school dropout rate was 8.6 percent. Like other suburban schools, we were faced with the community concerns related to the large numbers of students who were not completing school. We commissioned a task force of 12 district personnel, included over 100 community members, and began working on the strategy for change. Through the course of six months, programs were recognized for their abilities to retain students. New programs were created. Partnerships were created between the school, the universities, business and individuals.

The task force members made a series of recommendations to the Board of Education. Finally, a document was created which described the 63 programs for students at risk. We thought of programs as having "lives." We agreed not to institute programs without understanding that if the needs were met or changed, we would be prepared to drop or modify the services. Programs were different across the district depending on the individual needs of the students.

The Summer Retrieval Program was started in 1988 to encourage students to return to school. During the summer, a team of counselors worked with a coordinator to call every student who had left school during the year. Each phone call was followed-up with a postcard which gave appropriate phone numbers. The idea was that a personal phone call might be a way to inform students about their options. Over half of the students were not reachable. The other half, however, were responsive. Many were surprised to realize the school personnel cared and were appreciative of the information regarding summer credits, night school, equivalency programs and open enrollment registration. The first year, over 50 students enrolled and completed that school year. The program continues to be a successful way to contact students who left, but lack the information to return.

The Home-School Liaisons provide a '90s truant officer service to the K-8 population. The liaisons begin the morning with the absentee list at the school and then go door-to-door in search of children. One of the strengths of this program is that the liaisons work with families rather than individuals. They often provide the food, clothing and shelter needs through referrals and external assistance. These are not enviable positions, as they require the personnel to be a bit of a teacher, social worker, police officer, parent and objective observer. The funding is shared with other organizations through a grant.

The Partners in Reading program is a curriculum which has truly affected the next generation of students. We have housed a teen mothers program for many years and the majority of the coursework was related to parenting, counseling and independent study. Recognizing the importance of literacy and the statistics which indicate that the mother's reading level is the best indicator of student success in school, we developed a reading program. Rather than having our teen moms follow traditional curriculum, we created a course in which we taught the teen moms how to begin to teach reading to their children. The program includes visits to elementary schools so the teen moms could also practice reading to older children. The results have been astounding in terms of the change of attitude for the teen parents.

These three programs illustrate the variety of programs which we offer. The latest 1990 dropout rate for the Aurora Public Schools is 4.2 percent. Many of our successes are attributable to the major shift in thinking — all of our students deserve an education, and we're willing to do what we can to see 100 percent in caps and gowns.

Pitfalls And Successes In Setting Up An Elementary School-Age Mentoring Program

Diana E. Pope

The presenter has been working with school districts to help set up various mentoring programs as dropout prevention measures in the state of Kentucky. Throughout the doctoral program at Nova University, the presenter has concentrated on mentoring as a means of increasing attendance—thus helping to prevent future dropouts. For this article, mentoring is defined as a student-adult partnership. The term "mentor" dates back to ancient Greece, when Odysseus went to war and entrusted the well-being of his son to his loyal friend whose name was Mentor (Smink, 1990). People who are "mentors" can be from the community, business world, and/or the school. The student (sometimes called "mentee") can be any person who is not meeting his/her potential in one or more area(s) of emotional, social, and/or academic growth. Some mentoring partnerships/relationships develop spontaneously and some develop through formal encouragement by another. Spontaneous or formal, the mentor must believe that he/she, as a caring supportive adult, can make a major difference wherever the student may be in his/her growth of development. This article discusses the formal development of a mentoring partnership.

This partnership or relationship benefits both participants. The benefit to the mentor dates back to when Hippocrates said, "Sometimes give your services for nothing, calling to mind a previous benefaction or present satisfaction" (Cuomo, 1988). A personal satisfaction comes from knowing that, over time, you have affected another human life in a positive way. There are many reasons for mentors volunteering to be role models, sponsors, teachers, counselors, and/or trusted friends. No matter what the reason, mentors as people need reinforcements that their time and energy are well-spent. Suggestions for increasing mentor motivation are that the coordinator of the mentoring program maintain personal contact, provide recognition through a newsletter or notes, stress the benefits the program provides to student and society, solicit feedback, and encourage suggestions (Cuomo, 1988).

Research has shown that students with a mentor show increases in their social, personal, and academic skills. A supportive adult positively affects a student's growth, thus increasing the chances of a young person to attend school, and his chances throughout life. This article primarily deals with the mentor, but one must not forget that the student (mentee's) willingness and capability of having the relationship is also a primary factor (Cuomo, 1988).

To have an effective mentoring program, several steps must be taken in order to avoid future pitfalls, as is true with any at-risk programs. Before one sets up a mentoring program, he/she needs to obtain the cooperation of the school personnel and all parties must be up-front about the boundaries of the mentoring program. For example, can the program be after school, during school time, or set up like a Big Brothers and Big Sisters program? School personnel's belief and cooperation in the program will affect everyone's interest level in the project. Before beginning a mentoring partnership, one must look at the goals or expected benefits. The expected benefits/goals for the writer's targeted students were the following: helping the student recognize the importance of being at school; helping the student recognize the importance of learning; developing educational and/or career goals; and serving as a vehicle for self-discovery in personal and social skills. Now, decide the criteria in selecting the students. Gather basic data on targeted students being matched with a mentor such as, but not inclusive: Date of birth, number of times retained and in what grade, reading level, number of schools attended, sex, present grade, and when possible ask school personnel (administrative, teachers, and/or secretaries) about negative and positive attributes of the targeted students. The prime indicator for being selected to be in the writer's mentor program was based on non-attendance. The writer was not looking for the already classified truant students, but those who missed 11 or more days their previous school year without any real justifications. The average days missed at the sample elementary school was 18 days the previous school year. Numerous researchers (Erickson, 1989; Bhaerman & Kopp, 1988) have shown attendance to be a prime indicator for those students who are at greater risk for eventually dropping out of school. Nonattendance begins in the elementary grades and only increases with middle school until the student is of age to drop out. Benjamin Bloom and others' findings support an early prevention approach to at-risk students (DePauw, 1987). The focus of the elementary years should be prevention and remediation. Mentoring is seen as one successful prevention and remediation strategy.

A determination must be made about exact qualities a mentor should possess as well as the recruitment and retainment of mentors. Numerous listings about qualities of a mentor can be obtained. The following list was taken from *The Louisville Education & Employment Partnership: Mentoring Program Manual* (1989): "... are committed to helping students establish and support their goals; are willing to communicate with students; are caring, sensitive, understanding, and persistent; feel responsible for the student and provide guidance and support." Forms must then be developed, such as liability and permission releases, responsibilities of each party, volunteer applications, student information and evaluation forms. These forms, especially the liability and permission release, should first be approved by the legal agency for the state department of education and the local school district's legal agency. Be up-front with the mentor about his/her responsibilities, the purpose of forms developed, and the purpose of checking references. In checking references, consider the following: emotional maturity, job or school stability, quality of their relationships (Cuomo, 1988). The writer also urges a police check, especially if there is to be contact after school hours and/or away from school grounds. Most people who volunteer to participate have the willingness and capability of maintaining a mentoring relationship.

Prospective mentors need training after the selection process. The number of training sessions is dependent primarily on the type of mentoring program. Training is an excellent way to elicit feedback from participants and to share information. Several ideas for initial or continuing training are the purpose(s) of the mentoring partnership, communication between mentor and student, setting the guidelines, how to manage problems that may occur, cultural awareness, building trust, increasing self-esteem and understanding yourself.

Last, but one that should never be omitted, is the ongoing and final evaluation phase. This can be done in several ways that include informal and formal methods. It can be as simple as receiving feedback from a mentor or mentee about how they are feeling and what they are doing. Several other suggestions are: checklists as tips for effective mentoring or the effective mentor rate chart that the mentor should have a copy of; a mentor/mentee student progress report that contains several short-answer questions. Since the mentoring program for the writer was developed on the basis of non-attendance, there are several checklists that could be used with the school. Remember mentoring involves a holistic approach. Several of the writer's evaluation forms are based on a school climate and classroom checklist along with a short-answer progress report for staff as well as informal communication. Records of students will be checked for attendance and grade improvement.

There are various ways of evaluating, but there needs to be some planned way of obtaining information so one can see where the program is, make revisions when necessary, and then report the data to appropriate school personnel so decisions can be made in implementing or continuing future mentoring programs. Evaluation also gives more accurate data for researchers who are looking at the how and why of successful programs — especially at the elementary level. Without evaluation, one will not know where they are going. If you don't know where you are going, several roads can be taken and not necessarily the most effective for either the mentor or mentee. In setting up an effective mentoring program, one must know where the path is going, as the purpose of the mentoring goals is to help a student down the right path so he/she can be a winner in life.

The presenter has the grass-roots knowledge and knows pitfalls to avoid, so there are more successes than not. A mentoring program was developed from the preliminary stage, obtaining volunteers to matching students with volunteers, and evaluating the match and program. Helping students stay in school must be approached holistically, involving community, parent, and school. This holistic approach is expressed many times in House Bill (HB) 940, which is the basis of our restructuring the whole Kentucky education system.

A grass-roots packet of information from the writer's experiences will be given to participants. This will enable them to begin and/or broaden their mentoring program within their school district. The writer has experienced various types of mentoring programs, from volunteers coming into the school at lunch time, to after-school programs, to mentors and students scheduling themselves throughout the week.

Mentoring is one effective activity to increase students' attendance and self-esteem. Mentoring should begin at the elementary level and continue during the adolescent years and yes, there are mentoring programs in the adult work world. According to the Louisville Education & Employment Partnership there are four stages to a successful mentoring partnership. The first stage is initiation, during which the mentor and student are flattered by the situation and are enthusiastic. Second, cultivation, during which the relationship becomes more realistic and mutual. Third, separation, during which the student outgrows the need to be mentored and establishes a foundation for moving forward with or without the mentor physically being present. Last, re-definition, during which the mentor does not have a direct influence over the student's behavior. The mentoring program needs to be one activity within a comprehensive plan for keeping students in school. The presenter would agree with a teacher in Oregon that awareness, compassion, and teamwork (ACT) are the foundations for a sound mentoring program. (DePauw, 1987).

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The Vocational-Academic Approach for Dropout Prevention

Gene Bottoms, Alice Presson, and Sandra Pritz

Of the students who choose to drop out of Southern schools, many might benefit from a different approach. This paper describes nine strategies used by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), in collaboration with the Center on Education and Training for Employment (CETE) at the Ohio State University, for enhancing the basic competencies and academic progress of at-risk students at the secondary school level. These nine strategies have a common emphasis on the relevance of education to employment or, in school terms, a vocational-academic approach with support services.

SREB and CETE are testing the effectiveness of the nine strategies through the administration of a Dropout Prevention Demonstration Project supported by a U.S. Department of Education grant. SREB and CETE originally established the following responsibilities describing their role in the project:

- Provide technical assistance and coordination to pilot site staff, enabling them to develop, implement, and adjust site activities in support of the nine strategies;

- Facilitate the involvement of business and industry and other stakeholders at the pilot sites in an organized series of activities to keep at-risk students in school; and
- Assess the degree to which pilot sites have implemented planned activities and evaluate their effectiveness in keeping targeted students in school and in improving their basic competency achievement.

To carry out these objectives, SREB and CETE have provided technical assistance, enabling pilot site staff to develop, implement, and adjust the strategies in ways that are best tailored to the at-risk students in the particular school. The combination of strategies that have been implemented and the form of implementation varied from one school to another. The same overall thrust, however, has allowed for common staff development and assessment procedures.

Because of the emphasis on assisting students to use academic learning to solve meaningful problems in their lives, SREB and CETE have stressed pilot sites' involvement with business and industry — natural stakeholders in the education of their future employees. School business councils were formed and asked to become involved in a series of activities to help students stay in school. These range from developing and underwriting a media campaign to raise awareness of the need for students to stay in school to providing opportunities for work experiences and in curriculum and counseling activities.

As a result of reviewing the research and practices in dropout prevention, SREB and CETE identified the following nine basic strategies for sites to implement with targeted assistance to students at risk of dropping out of school. They believed that their implementation would assist in accomplishing the primary goal by increasing student competencies in communications, mathematics, and science and by giving students timely and focused support. The project assessment plan will provide not only a description of the effectiveness of each strategy, but will also identify needs for staff development and other forms of technical assistance.

- **Identify potential dropouts early** in their middle and high school career and select those who will receive targeted assistance. A periodic and reliable identification process is essential for providing targeted assistance to potential dropouts. These students must be identified early to make use of special interventions designed to turn them around and steer them away from dropout behavior.
- **Establish higher basic competency expectations** for targeted potential dropouts. Teachers and guidance counselors must show that they expect these students to achieve more by encouraging them to take higher level math and science. This means that teachers and counselors may have to change conventional attitudes about what these students should study and how well they can learn. This requires administrators to provide staff development programs that address teachers' beliefs and expectations regarding at-risk students.
- **Enroll targeted potential dropout in a planned program of vocational and academic study**. These students must not be shuffled onto the general track, which will lead them nowhere. Instead, teachers and counselors must work on an individual basis with these students to help them plan a program of study that will lead to both employment and further education either on the job or in some postsecondary institution. At-risk students need access to college preparatory level mathematics, science, and language arts. This group of students in particular must be able to see the relevance of school and how it can prepare them for a future that

they might desire.

- **Utilize applied and functional context instructional strategies** to teach basic competencies. Teachers must present essential content in a way that is meaningful. This means using instructional methods that engage these students in the learning process so that they can relate content to real life. Peer tutoring and cooperative learning groups appear to be highly beneficial.
- **Enhance and expand targeted students' personal views of their career and education potential and opportunities.** Many potential dropouts come from backgrounds in which there is no tradition of either education or a career. They must have access to persons and materials which will enable them to build a dream for the future. Schools must provide students the opportunity not only to learn about their career and education potential, but also to experience firsthand the environment of work and further education. They can then understand the importance of planning a program of study leading to work and further education.
- **Utilize an interdisciplinary team of vocational, non-vocational, and support personnel to plan and monitor curriculum and provide extra instructional support to targeted students over periods of several years.** Teachers and counselors must keep track of the academic achievements of these students in order to provide extra help at critical times. This cannot be accomplished solely by one person who may be the "hero" of the effort. Each teacher may have a potential dropout in class and must know how to help that student. A core of teachers providing assistance is essential for identifying the needs of the potential dropout, arranging for special assistance when necessary, and monitoring that student's progress through school. A school administrator must provide visible support and encouragement to this team in order for it to be very effective.
- **Implement, as needed, a program of personal attention and extra instructional support to targeted students.** Potential dropouts usually have personal and/or academic difficulties. Teachers must convey to these students that they genuinely care about them and will facilitate the extra help that the students may need to succeed.
- **Involve parents in retaining in school and advancing the basic competencies of targeted students.** Schools must develop new ways to interest and involve parents in the work of their children at school. This may mean that schools will have to show parents the benefits of working for a high school diploma and how to help their children at home.
- **Involve business and community leaders in retaining in school and advancing the basic competencies of targeted students.** This includes continuous interaction with a business council to focus on ways to promote and advance dropout prevention. These efforts may include developing a mentoring program, curtailing the hiring of dropouts, developing employment practices that encourage students to strive for the high school diploma, and encouraging employees with children in school to become involved in their children's future. The dropout problem is more than a school problem. It is a problem which the community may inadvertently promote and whose solution can benefit the community.

As a result of administering this project, SREB and CETE would summarize the following as essential elements that seem to promote dropout prevention success at the school level.

Committed Leader at the School Building Level. Each school must have someone in charge of dropout prevention activities at the school building level. That person must be committed to dropout prevention and have the time to keep track of the implementation process on a daily basis. He or she must constantly monitor the program in order to coordinate the necessary technical assistance to overcome any problems.

Commitment by Administrators. Successful sites have school superintendents who see dropout prevention as an integral part of a school system's work and give it their support in a visible way that demonstrates its importance to faculty and school administrators. Building administrators who have established as a schoolwide goal the success of all students have been successful in reducing the number of dropouts.

Timely Identification of Targeted Students. Schools must identify their targeted students before school starts or early thereafter. Sites that do not identify their targeted students until the end of the first quarter have lost the opportunity to make a great impact upon at-risk students at a point where students can believe that they have a chance to improve academically and to get involved in school activities.

Raising Teachers' Expectations of Students. Teachers must be convinced that the at-risk students can do better and must convey that their students can do better than they have done in school. This confidence, when coupled with extra assistance and other interventions, can provide the extra boost that some students need to stay in school. Teachers may need to help develop self-esteem in students who have little or none.

Encouragement of All School Staff to Focus on Potential Dropouts. Schools must promote and support teaching staffs in a major effort to assign and review purposeful homework. Counselors must have the extra time necessary for working with potential dropouts and their parents in developing programs of vocational and academic study.

System for Providing Personal Attention and for Checking Students' Progress. Schools must provide the various types of personal attention that potential dropouts need and must develop a system for checking targeted students' progress frequently. This involves verifying that each targeted student is enrolled in a planned program of vocational and academic study, that the student is receiving applied instruction, that the student is in fact receiving extra help when needed, and that the student has not been slipping academically or falling into a detrimental pattern of missing school.

Encouraging Teachers to Use Applied Instructional Techniques. Schools must provide at-risk students access to courses designed to allow students to learn mathematics, language arts, and science in the context of meaningful activities. Likewise, teachers must have materials and receive staff development aimed at improving applied teaching methods.

Continuous and Engaging Focus on Targeted Students' Future Careers. Students can improve their academic progress when they see a connection between school and a future job. Schools must develop ways to help targeted students and their parents discover connections between school and a job. A once-a-year activity may be helpful, but unless it is followed by planning and firsthand experience with employers, the targeted at-risk student is unlikely to know how to work toward a career.

Common Planning Time for Dropout Staff. Interdisciplinary teams are most effective in steering the dropout effort in schools where they have designated and allocated time to meet regularly. Such teams can function better in schools in which the principal has viewed them as an important element in the school's dropout effort and has provided a way for staff to meet to discuss the progress of targeted students.

Keeping Parents Informed and Involved. Schools must engage parents on a regular basis by visiting homes and busing the parents to school for meetings or other special events. Schools must get parents involved in the educational process of their child by developing creative ways to attract parents who live far from the school and/or are poorly educated themselves and thus see little value in an education.

Continuous Involvement with the Business Council. Business councils offer an opportunity for the local business, industry, and civic leaders to assist in dealing with problems that are often related to the community. Schools must be assertive in bringing dropout prevention to the attention of the business community and in helping them to focus constantly on dropout prevention.

St. Petersburg, Florida Challenge: A School for At-Risk Students

Martha Ratliff

There is increasing concern about the size of the dropout problem nationally. While it is conservatively estimated that 27 percent of students entering the ninth grade are leaving school before graduation, that startling statistic is made even more frightening by the awareness that an untold number of youngsters drop out even before they reach ninth grade. In Florida, close to half (about 40 percent) of the students entering ninth grade fail to graduate, which bestows upon Florida the dubious distinction of having the lowest graduation rate of the country, ranking 50th.

Youngsters are leaving schools in numbers surpassing 1,000,000 yearly. Approximately one-half of those one million students are above average in intelligence, and 10 to 15 percent could be considered gifted and talented. These bright students are dissatisfied with the school experience and are dropping out in staggering numbers. They are becoming a drain on a technologically advancing society rather than an asset. Jobs for which today's kindergartners will apply have not yet been invented and jobs available for today's wage earners are increasingly difficult for low skilled employees to find jobs. These factors contribute to make the plight of the high school dropout extremely perilous. These youngsters are finding themselves unable to find gainful employment and are becoming a drain on today's economy rather than a boost.

Who are these students and what can be done to stem this appalling waste of human potential? An exploration of student records and interviews with dropouts reveals that early indicators of at-risk students can be discerned at the elementary school level. In fact, many experienced kindergarten teachers report they are able to accurately identify potential dropouts at the kindergarten level. Children are beginning to exhibit signs of dissatisfaction and are affected early in their school experience. Like the decision to use drugs, the decision to drop out of school is usually made in the fourth and fifth grade, making early intervention essential.

An exploration of students' records and personal interviews with high school dropouts reveal that early indicators of at-risk students can be discerned at the elementary school level. These indicators include:

1. Being retained or failing a grade. Of students retained once, the drop out rate is 70 percent. Of students retained twice, the rate increases to 90 percent.

2. Children with parents or older siblings who dropped out are more inclined to drop out as well. These students see an adult without a high school diploma able to earn a wage and feel

that they will be able to as well. Previously this would not have been a problem, but with technology advancing at the rate it is, it becomes problematic in that there are few low-skill jobs available.

3. Students who experience a stressful family life are less active in learning activities. Stressful family life includes physical or sexual abuse, loss of a parent through death or divorce, and may include neighborhood distractions such as the sounds of gun shots every night, disturbing both a youngster's concentration and sleep.

4. Students who are unable to read at grade level are unable to keep up in any subject area and become discouraged, often giving up on the desire to learn.

5. Students with low self-esteem are less available for learning and are more likely to drop out. In a study reported by Jack Canfield, at the 1989 National Dropout Prevention Conference, 80 percent of students entering kindergarten experience high self-esteem. By the end of kindergarten year, only 50 percent have a positive self-image, and by graduation from high school, only 10 percent feel they are worthy and capable.

Nationally, educators are exploring programs designed specifically to stem the flow of students out of schools prior to graduation. Programs range from making drastic changes like instituting year-round schools and decreasing the pupil/teacher ratio, to adding volunteers to the school programming. All programs reflect the knowledge that, as educators, we need to do something different. Children are failing in the current system. To only do the same thing more or harder will continue to be ineffective. The vast majority of programs currently being implemented are focused on the high school youngster. Few are focusd on the middle school youngster. Though the decision to drop out is made in elementary school, even less are centered on assisting the elementary school youngster.

In Pinellas County, Florida, there is one program designed specifically to be a prevention program aimed toward elementary school age youngsters. The Pinellas County Challenge School is designed to impact problem areas for youngsters in the fourth and fifth grades. It involves children being transported from their zoned school and placed in a program designed to provide a bridge between home and school to ameliorate factors which hinder success in school and subsequently lessen truancy and dropout problems. Children at each sending school are identified by utilizing established eligibility criteria which coincide with the risk factors mentioned previously. Parents are contacted regarding their willingness to consider the Challenge school for their youngster. The referral is then sent to the Challenge school for consideration. A visit is made to the referring school by Challenge staff to review the folder and a decision regarding the placement needs of each youngster is made. Since Challenge is a voluntary program, an intake visit is conducted with parents (either in their home, school or some other setting), the children and their families are given a tour of the school facility, parental consent is obtained, and subsequently the child is enrolled in the Challenge school. Children are placed in a classroom in which there are 18 children, a teacher, and a teacher's assistant. In each classroom the focus is on increasing self-esteem, test scores, grades, and appropriate behavior in school.

Teachers utilize the *Positive Action* affective curriculum to assist children in increasing their prosocial skills and their self-esteem. This curriculum assists teachers in encouraging children to behave in ways that are helpful both to themselves and to others. One child from each classroom is recognized each week for his/her "positive actions" with a party and a certificate. This encourages working toward a goal of positive prosocial behaviors which will enable each child to manage his/her behavior in any setting which presents itself, including any difficult school setting.

There is an awareness at the Challenge School that every learner learns in a different manner. With class size reduced to 18 students and the availability of a teacher's assistant, the teachers are able to provide a maximum amount of individual time for each youngster. They are able to attend to the learning styles of each youngster, tailoring material to meet the specific learning needs of each student. In the Challenge school classroom, learning takes on a new excitement with the addition of many manipulatives, auditory material, and visual materials for the students to explore and discover.

A state-of-the-art computer lab is available at the Challenge school for the students to utilize twice per week. The children spend one half hour twice a week on the computer receiving additional educational experiences. Children are placed in reading and math skills based on their pretest scores. As they experience success, they progress to increasingly difficult tasks. These experiences are designed to enhance the curriculum and to provide one more experience to the children which is success-based.

The fifth-grade children at Challenge School participate in a career lab in which they interact with career-related materials and with their teacher in an employee/employer relationship. There are 23 stations in the career lab at which children can learn a particular job. They apply for a position, interview for that position, complete a learning packet for that position, and perform that particular job. They are paid in Challenge money for their work in the career lab. The stations which are included in the career lab include waiter/waitress, teacher, receptionist, cashier, plumber, electrician, draftsman, tiles, etc. The children are able to relate their school experience to the world of work while they are still functioning at the elementary school level.

These students also receive intensive assistance from the student services team (guidance counselor, social worker, and psychologist). The student services team is available full-time to the Challenge school, a difference from the usual staffing model, which only provides for one day per week for social work and psychology services. Services which the student services team provides include individual, group, and family intervention in the school, homes, and other settings. Additionally, consultation is provided by the student services team to school personnel regarding the specific needs of the children and their families.

Interventions provided by the student services team focus on assisting the children and their families in encouraging academic success for the identified child and identifying and ameliorating other family or individual issues which interfere with successful school experiences. The student services team provides classroom guidance lessons weekly. These focus on prosocial skills, resistance training, and the recognition of the worth of each individual. Individual counseling is available on an as-needed basis for those students, with parental permission, who indicate a desire to address individual issues and work on the vicissitudes with which children must live. Group counseling is available for students with issues concerning familial alcohol or drug abuse, grief issues, divorce and separation issues, and for students with parents or close family members in Saudi Arabia. Family counseling is available on a limited basis for students and their families who express a desire to address family issues. There is also a series of parenting support groups which is offered at different times of the day for parents who feel the need to interact with other parents and receive some training regarding effective parenting techniques.

The Student Assistance Program is the vehicle through which teachers and staff receive consultation from the student services team regarding the specific needs of individual students. The Student Assistance Team meets weekly with teachers, at which time teachers express problems they are having in their classrooms. These meetings are designed to provide a brainstorming session involving all attending to increase the options available to teachers. Teachers are encouraged to support and encourage one another in their efforts with children and to explore other ways of interacting with the children in their classes which will increase positive educational outcomes.

There is a strong community involvement component at the Challenge School. There have been in excess of 1,000 hours of volunteer time donated to the Challenge School since its inception in the early summer of 1990. Volunteers have performed a variety of tasks, ranging from painting the inside of the school building to mentoring and tutoring youngsters attending the Challenge School. A variety of groups have become involved in volunteering at the school, including Florida Power personnel, Eckerd College students, and the local ministerial alliance. Both students and staff recognize the valuable addition volunteers have provided to the academic and emotional growth of students attending the Challenge School.

A pre-post test statistical design is being utilized to assess the effectiveness of the Challenge School. In addition to a pre-post comparison of Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) scores, attendance, and grades, the Challenge School is utilizing the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Achenbach Behavior Problem Checklist to assess progress in self-esteem and improved behavior. The results will be tabulated at the end of this academic year and will be available for publication at that time.

One small measure of success the students at the Challenge School are currently able to realize is in the fourth-grade upgrade program. Eighteen students entered the Challenge School having been retained at least once; all were overage for their grade. They set behavioral and academic goals at the beginning of the year with the help of their teacher, the student services team, and their parents. At the end of the first semester, the upgrade class was able to hold a graduation to the fifth grade. Seventeen of the eighteen students were able to achieve their goals and to be promoted to the fifth grade. Next year, these students will meet their age mates in the sixth grade.

The Challenge School is designed to increase students' self-esteem, academic achievement, social, and family functioning, and to provide them with the desire and skills to indulge in limitless living. With gifted teachers, gifted staff, and visionaries, students are assisted in becoming individuals who will take their place in society as contributing members. It is also designed to assist children in learning the skills to deal with a world that can be inconsistent towards them at best and cruel and violent at worst. It is a program in which each student's potential is allowed to flower and grow.

Florida's Interagency Student Services Programs: A Community Partnership

Josephine K. Newton

The 1989 Florida Legislature amended already standing education legislation Section 232.303, Florida Statutes, regarding Interagency student services. The intent of the amendments was to provide a way which, through interagency planning, public-private partnerships and sharing of resources, the public schools, the laboratory schools and the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (DHRS) demonstrate procedures to achieve (1) increased student learning and student time on task, (2) reductions in health, behavioral, truancy, drug and alcohol problems among students, (3) increased efficiency and effectiveness of personnel resources of schools and of the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, (4) reductions in the incidence of teen suicide and (5) reductions in the incidence of criminal activity in teens. A strong evaluation component was of primary importance in each project.

The projects are to serve students in grade 6-8 and must be signed jointly by the district school superintendent, DHRS administrator, principal of participating schools and the governing boards, and, if participating, the Cities in Schools director. Money was appropriated to fund a limited number of projects in 1990 and again in 1991. The Department of Education was authorized and directed to disseminate throughout the state a "Request for Proposal" that resulted in some funding being made available to six projects. Information concerning three of these projects will be presented here.

Alachua County

Cooperative Family Services Model: A Middle School Initiative

The program will serve approximately 80-100 at-risk students who are recipients of some category of DHRS services and have younger siblings in the school system.

The program offered is two-fold:

1. A school-based after-school enrichment program, which will address at-risk students' academic and affective needs. Each group of students will rotate through programs addressing (a) "Skills for Adolescence," an affective program, (b) academic program utilizing the school's compensatory education computer laboratory and software, (c) a music and drama program, and (4) a pre-vocational program.

2. A Family Service Center which will address the economic and social service needs of the targeted students and their families.

Evaluation data collected will indicate:

- Achievement scores for targeted students will increase a minimum of two Normalize Curve Equivalent.

- At least 80 percent of the students will show a positive change in attitudes and self-regulating behavior.

- At least 80 percent of targeted families will report improvement in the delivery of HRS services.

- At least 50 percent decrease in the number of suicide attempts reported.

- A minimum of a 30 percent decline in referrals to juvenile authorities.

- A minimum of 20 percent of the target group adults will pursue training and/or educational opportunities.

Pasco County

Schools and HRS As Partners in Education (S.H.A.P.E.)

Students selected for the program will come from (1) educational alternative programs; (2) those referred to DHRS programs of Children in Need of Services (CINS) and Families in Need of Services (FINS); (3) students referred by self, parents, or teachers as having behavioral, truancy, health or substance abuse problems; and (4) students not served in the above categories who are currently under HRS supervision.

The program content is based on research and knowledge as indicated in Benjamin Bloom's *Human Characteristics and School Learning*; Dr. Arnold Goldstein's *Skill Streaming The Adolescent* and *The Prepared Curriculum*, Steven Glenn's *Developing Capable People*, and other similar programs which address adolescent issues and concepts.

The actual content will address the following areas.

Services to Students

* Self-esteem, image building, and social skills groups, advisement activities (including articulation from feeder schools and to high schools, classroom units, support groups and time-out counseling for anger management).

Services to Parents

* Home liaison, services to parents' at-risk support groups, social/recreational family activities, referral services (health, counseling substance abuse, etc.)

Services to the Community

* Court liaison, Private Industry Council (employability skills training), HRS volunteer staff development, agency collaboration on services, community counseling programs.

Evaluation data collected will indicate:

- At least a 2 percent decline in discipline/behavioral referrals

- At least a 3 percent decrease in truancy referrals school-wide

- A 39 percent decrease in delinquency referrals to HRS

- Pre-post school attitude survey of the students

Santa Rosa County

Project Vision

This project is a collaborative interagency effort by four state agencies to provide a combination of services. The four state agencies involved are: Santa Rosa County Schools, (SRCS), Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitation Services (DHRS), the University of West Florida (UWF), and the Panhandle Management Development Network (PMDN). IBM is the private agency involved. Project Vision provides an opportunity to develop a delivery system to include educational, health, and social services to the youth and families of a rural, low socioeconomic population.

Students who exhibited three or more of the school, family, or personal related factors of the district's potential dropout profile were selected. The educational alternative component of the district's Dropout Prevention Plan will be services by DHRS personnel housed at the school site to meet the health and social components. Personnel providing the research and evaluation components will also be housed on-site. A major component of the project will be family oriented.

The total program is designed to:

* Provide early educational and social intervention and mediation for children with problems

* Deliver coordinate, comprehensive educational, social, and health-related services (Full Service School)

* Assess effectiveness through research, educational testing, and improvement in social functioning and health status.

* Produce a transferable model for educational, health, and social service integration (Full Service School)

Information on three additional programs follows:

Cities in Schools in Florida, Inc.

The funding was given to the state office and permitted them to provide assist programs for at-risk students in school districts where their organization was active.

Duval County

The students chosen to participate will be in the sixth grade at Long Beach Center and the seventh and eighth grades at Kirby Smith Junior High School. These students must be experiencing problems in one or more of the following areas: academics, medical, truancy or behavior. HRS will assign one counselor, on a part-time basis, to assist in providing services at the two project schools. A project supervisor will be hired by the school system.

Volusia County

The students served will be identified as at-risk and are attending Deltona Middle School. The project will be administered by the school social worker under the joint supervision of the principal and coordinator of the school resource officer, HRS staff assigned to the project and school personnel. The truancy intervention component will involve the local sheriffs department, picking up students on the streets, taking them to the truancy intervention center where they will receive counseling, parents will be contacted, and students will be delivered to their appropriate school.

All six of these programs were funded for the 1991 year.

Additional information about these programs can be obtained by contacting Josephine K. Newton, ACSW, LCSW, Program Specialist, School Social Work, Florida Department of Education, 844 Florida Education Center, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400.

School-Within-a-School: An Intervention Program for At-Risk Freshmen at Fayette County High School

Gary Phillips, Leslie White, JoAnne Durring, Kris Floyd, Bill Helvig

For several years, members of the Fayette County High School faculty and administration have expressed increasing concern with the low success rates of some segments of the freshman class. Many fail at least one class each semester; a significant number fail multiple classes. Failure to succeed academically, however, is compounded by failure to adjust to the daily structures and routines of the high school. Discipline referrals for these freshman have traditionally outnumbered those for other classes and their absentee rate has compared unfavorably. The probability that these students will leave school without graduating increases as they fall behind their classmates academically and perceive school to be adversarial and alienating. In an attempt to intervene in and reverse this downward spiral, the faculty and administration developed an initial at-risk plan which evolved into School-Within-a-School.

This at-risk program developed for implementation in 1989-90 consisted of three volunteer teachers, one in English and two in science. Using test scores, achievement records, and teacher recommendations, the program identified at-risk freshmen. Students were assigned to one or both teachers, depending upon the area or areas of perceived weakness, but this scheduling procedure made the sharing of a common group of students an impossibility. The teachers were given an additional planning period, but again inconsistency hampered the effective use of this extra time. During the first semester, for example, the planning periods were not common. Although that problem was rectified second semester, the geographical separation of the teachers, who were assigned to separate buildings, continued to impede any consistent common-planning effort. The program results, therefore, were mixed.

With an awareness of the shortcomings of the experiment and an excitement born of the glimmers of success, a team of administrators and teachers sought additional strategies for the 1990-91 term. What developed was a second generation freshman at-risk program: Learning Opportunities.

The team realized that to increase effectiveness significant changes had to be made; the structure had to be modified and the scope expanded. These changes, however, required the program be granted flexibility in teacher utilization and scheduling. The planning team, therefore, approached the district office with a request for support. The district responded not only with enthusiastic encouragement, but also with a budget of approximately $60,000 to support the fledgling program. The Director of Secondary Education offered his assistance in creating new approaches and effected a name change from at-risk to Learning Opportunities to counter the negative connections of the first label. Teacher recruitment began. Two teams, consisting of a math, science, and English teacher each, were assembled. More importantly, every teacher on the teams either volunteered or applied specifically for the program. Perhaps of even greater significance, these individuals requested training to help them prepare more effectively for the challenge. In response to their request, TESA training was organized. These teachers not only participated in the course but implemented their newly learned strategies and tactics throughout the term. The experience has validated an early belief of those who developed Learning Opportunities: teachers are a crucial aspect of the program's success or failure, and their genuine excitement at being a part of the excitement is essential.

Each team combined math, science, and English into a three-hour teaching block. To allow the greatest flexibility in meeting student needs, one three-hour block was scheduled for the first three teaching periods of the day; the other was scheduled for the final three periods. Within the three-hour block, each team was given the opportunity to schedule its own activities, flexibly negotiating for lengthened class periods, shared field trips, or interdisciplinary assignments and instruction. To coordinate plans, objectives, and activities, teachers on a team were given a two-hour common planning block. This planning block is used not only to plan for instruction, but also to share strategies, to discuss student performance, to contact parents, and to meet with administrators for periodic assessment. The designated planning block has been an essential element in the success of the program. It has allowed teachers on a team to focus on the specific needs of a designated group of children and to share knowledge about those students as well as to create for them a stable, supportive, and predictable environment in each of their three core academic subjects.

This is the initial year of Learning Opportunities. Indications at mid-year signal notable success. This is not to say that the program has sailed smoothly through a calm sea. In truth, to maintain the metaphor, the program opened still trying to secure its mooring in rough waters. Unable to shed its initial negative overtones of at-risk, the program generated student and parental reaction which often required intervention and explanation. Scheduled to meet in three double-wide portable classrooms, the program spent its first days meeting in the auditorium. These difficulties proved to be challenges, not insurmountable obstacles. The first semester of Learning Opportunities has been completed. The results are exciting, but, to be truthful, the excitement started well before statistics were calculated.

Teachers became genuinely excited when they began to see tangible improvement in student performance, attitudes, self-esteem, and attendance. Parents began to share in the excitement, one noting in conference, for example, that getting her child up and off to school had been a difficult chore which generated friction and stress. Since Learning Opportunities, however, the morning experience in her home has been significantly different. Her student not only is cheerful but looks forward to going to school! Administrators, too, speak enthusiastically of the program because attendance has improved and discipline referrals have declined. This improvement can be discerned easily when attendance, passing rate, and discipline referral figures of the past are compared with those of the current year.

1989-1990	63 percent general freshmen passed English 37 percent failed
1990-1991	96 percent at-risk freshmen passed English 4 percent failed
1989-1990	92 percent attendance for freshmen
1990-1991	96 percent attendance for Learning Opportunities students

September - February

Freshman Discipline Referrals

1989-1990	400
1990-1991	322

Infractions Requiring ISS Response

1989-1990	225
1990-1991	191

Infractions Requiring OSS Response

1989-1990	98
1990-1991	66

At this point in the experiment, Learning Opportunities appears to be a viable approach to effecting a significant change in student achievement. Teachers in the project work simultaneously to challenge each student academically as well as to improve each individual's sense of self-worth. Teachers use their TESA training to communicate expectations and to help students adapt behavior and attitudes in such a way that success results. A student, Kathy Messiti, explains the experience: "Teachers teach us until we learn it. They treat us all equal" [sic]. Cooperative learning techniques reinforce the educational philosophy that individuals learn effectively from one another while at the same time each learns to be a contributing member of a team. Shannon Moore, also a Learning Opportunities student, expressed the importance of this approach when she wrote, "This past semester I have grown one major way. That is learning how to be in a community. Learning Opportunities has made me count on others [sic], that I'm not the only person whom things affect." The degree to which we feel confident that this approach is valuable is reflected in our plans not only to continuing Learning Opportunities for freshman next year but to expand the project to include sophomores. New teams will be added to continue delivering educational experiences to a community of learners in the most effective manner we have found to date. We are indeed so confident in what we are watching happen that long-term goals include phasing in a team annually until every grade level has a Learning Opportunities program as an option.

This approach to intervention is not perfect — few systems are when the components are dynamic individuals. We believe, however, that Learning Opportunities is a viable, realistic program which has already improved the success rate of students.

The scope of the planning procedures, the day-to-day organizational patterns, the instructional strategies, the nature of the successes and failures of the program can not be fully explored in a short article. Because we believe strongly in the project, however, we invite you to pursue your interest by writing or calling Mr. Gary Phillips, Principal; Fayette County High School; LaFayette Drive; Fayetteville, Georgia 30214; (404) 460-3540. We look forward to sharing our excitement an experience with you.

The Student Literacy Corps: A Program for Involving At-Risk Youth

Lawrence J. Sorohan and Joanne H. Edmondson

North Georgia College, a senior unit of the University of Georgia system, was awarded a contract for a Student Literacy Corps in 1990. This two-year program provides for a maximum grant of $50,000 over the contract period. The program requires that the contractor train volunteer college students to tutor in a structured program of literacy instruction in an establish-ed agency. The students must receive college credit for participation in the program. Students must also tutor a minimum of 40-60 hours on site each term.

The program at North Georgia College is designed to accomplish the purposes of training a cadre of college students who will become involved as tutors in an existing literacy program or who will begin a literacy program where it is needed; of intervening with middle grades' at-risk students in an effort to prevent dropouts; and of developing a level of cooperation with the public schools which will be a true partnership between the college and the public schools.

The Lumpkin County Middle School was chosen as the site for the practicum (tutoring) required in the training courses. It was determined that middle school students who were at-risk would provide the college tutors with opportunities for both development of tutoring skills and for immediate impact on a need the school had identified.

The changing family types and the high percentage of school dropouts are issues of concern for educators, counselors, and communities. The relationship between the two issues was examined in a rural, Appalachian middle school. In 1985 a class of eighth-graders (N=157) participated in a survey to determine the family types represented in their school. Results indicated that the proportions of nuclear families (58 percent), step-families (23 percent), and single-parent families (23 percent) were the same as the national percentages.

A longitudinal study of this class was completed five years later to determine who graduated, dropped out, or moved. These results indicated that the largest percentage of graduates (75 percent) came from the nuclear family, whereas the highest percentage of dropouts (47 percent) came from the single-parent family. Students from the stepfamily had the highest mobility rate (31 percent). The overall percentage of dropouts for the class of 1990 was 26 percent. In an effort to provide intervention and dropout prevention, educators from the middle school collaborated with educators at North Georgia College. The outcome of this meeting was a plan for a tutorial program in which college students would tutor middle school students. The program was scheduled to begin in October of 1990.

Which students, however, were to be tutored? Teachers administered the Dropout Alert Scale (DAS) developed by Delby Mathis to the school population. This instrument and teacher referrals, based on observations and students' grade reports, were the criteria for identifying students who needed academic assistance.

Middle school students were tutored on the average of twice weekly in several subject areas, as well as in organizational and study skills. The tutors consulted regularly with classroom teachers and the school counselor. Working on a one-to-one basis, the tutors often identified specific needs of students that may have gone unnoticed by the classroom teacher.

The middle school teachers named this program the STARS Program — Students Tutoring At-Risk Students. A special classroom was set up as the STARS Lab, where tutorial sessions were scheduled throughout the school day.

For the first quarter of the STARS Program, both middle school students and college students displayed a high level of enthusiasm. Teachers were cooperative and appreciative of college students who provided reinforcement of classroom lessons and remediation to approximately 60 students on a regular basis. Parents were appreciative. Further research will attempt to measure parental attitudes toward the project.

In comparing the students' midterm progress report with their report card for the first nine-week grading period, the college tutors found that 42 percent of the students' grades in various subjects improved. As students became successful in their schoolwork, teachers observed their gradual change toward a positive attitude and behavior.

The *Coopersmith Inventory*, a self-esteem inventory, was given to middle school students as a pretest to measure attitudes toward the self in social, academic, family, and personal areas of experience. The tutors, who will continue to gather data on their students, will administer this same instrument in the spring as a post-test.

Of the students receiving tutoring, only 40 percent came from a nuclear family, whereas 28 percent lived in a blended family and 32 percent lived with a single parent. These statistics substantiate the results of studies that have been done on family types of at-risk students.

The tutors provided encouragement, attention and a positive role model for the at-risk students. As a result, educators observed an increase of self-esteem in many of the middle school students. They observed also a sense of self-satisfaction in the college students.

When the objectives of the Student Literacy Corps meet an existing need in the public schools, the problems of working with the schools are either minimized or easily solved by negotiation. The three major problem areas were scheduling the tutoring sessions, matching tutors with the middle-grade students, and developing cooperative attitudes between teachers and the college students. Flexibility is necessary to accomplish the matching of tutors with middle-grade students. It is sometimes necessary to rematch tutors and students due to the normal schedule, personality differences, to ensure that the middle grades student has the tutor who can best meet his academic needs.

Many teachers have had non-productive experiences with volunteers. The attitudes produced by these experiences can be overcome through careful training of the college students and through specific sessions with the classroom teachers. A positive attitude on the part of the school administrators and the school counselor will also reduce the concern of the teachers about volunteers.

The college can enjoy benefits from working with the public schools. The research and educational implications are many and varied from these partnerships. The implications for experiential education learning activities in the school would provide a constant and continuous workshop for many of the college disciplines.

In a small community such as the home of North Georgia College, positive public relations with the public schools are a must. Programs which enhance the educational opportunities of the public school students will also pay positive benefits in the caliber of students sent to the college by the public school system.

The college must also provide leadership in the struggle against illiteracy from the total community. This leadership will encourage the business community as well as the non-business leaders to get involved in overcoming illiteracy. Only a full community effort has the hope of achieving community literacy.

Efforts by North Georgia College and the faculty of the college have produced an effort by the local Chamber of Commerce to install a three-tiered literacy effort. The goal of this effort is to involve every citizen possible in some literacy improvement project whether learning to read or extending the understanding of world affairs.

The educational implications implicit in the Student Literacy Corps program include the opportunities for experiential education that are the backbone of many programs such as teacher education and training health workers. As a site for practice of many kinds, cooperative schools enhance the college programs.

For individual college students, programs such as this offer an opportunity to learn whether they want to teach and how the schools function. They learn from their experiences with middle grades students how to make the transition from student to teacher. They learn firsthand how to identify learning styles and how to design instruction to accommodate different learning styles. They learn how attitudes are formed and changed, how to motivate reluctant learners and how to assess the progress of students. In other words, they learn a great deal about teaching and learning without the pressures and stress of a classroom of 25 students. They will, of course, also need to learn about classroom management, large group instruction, and other typical classroom requirements. The head start on practical experience with one or two students cannot fail to help them learn to be teachers. For some college students who have not yet decided on a career, this program can help in making the decision. At this stage of the program, three of the college students have decided to teach in the middle school. Two of the three have changed from non-teaching majors to the teaching major.

The use of volunteers in the public schools has not reached its full potential. Local schools have been hesitant to use untrained volunteers in a significant way to supplement the educational opportunities of the students. A systematic program with a training component should give the schools an impetus to train and use volunteers in many ways in the schools. There are many responsibilities that teachers have which do not require certificate level training that a cadre of volunteers specifically trained could and would perform. The school needs to know how, when, and where to use volunteers. Volunteers need to know they have the training and the support to make a positive difference in the experiences children have in school. Learning to be a volunteer and learning to use volunteers requires that volunteers be in the schools.

Summary

This program, designed with the purposes of training volunteers, tutoring at-risk youth and developing close association between the college and the public schools shows excellent potential. The preliminary results of the program in its early stages are encouraging. As further data are gathered, positive results in the achievements of at-risk youth, developing a cadre of volunteers and more cooperative programs between the college and public schools can be expected.

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Operation V.I.C.T.O.R.Y.
(Various Initiatives Contributing Towards Overcoming Riskness in Youth)

Christopher Scott Chalker

With widespread calls for the reform of our educational system, education has finally returned to the forefront of policy discussions at the state and national levels. However, as with all widespread movements, the current reform effort has its own direction and momentum. While current reform efforts are directing their attention toward certain problems within our schools, much effort is equally needed toward the growing number of high school dropouts.

Both national commission reports that generated the latest wave of school reform and responses of policymakers almost totally ignored the dropout problem in considering ways to improve education. Recommendations to raise standards for time spent in school, content of the curriculum, and amount of homework may further compound students' problems and cause even more of them to drop out. The truth is that recent state reforms have largely bypassed millions of students in schools across the nation.

Research on at-riskness is relatively new in content and organization. Most researchers have concluded that on the elementary school level, socioeconomic status is the prim-ary indicator of a student's future at-risk potential. However, as students move through the grades, their actual performance in school becomes a much better predictor; grades, attendance, disciplinary record, and retentions, for example, are very highly predictive of dropouts. Until programs designed to identify and prevent at-riskness are instituted in the elementary grades and given both opportunity and time to work, we will continue to see large numbers of secondary school students struggle through years of schooling without the means to graduate.

Statistics show that 54 percent of all at-risk students have been pulled out of elective and vocational courses and given state-mandated remedial English and/or mathematics in their place. As a result, more than half of all at-risk students find themselves in a strict academic regime of courses at a time when diversity and flexibility is needed to improve motivation, self-esteem, and attitude. Nearly 50 percent of all tenth-grade, at-risk students are being retained because of poor grades. Figures also show that nearly 65 percent of all at-risk students are ineligible for participation in extracurricular activities. No/pass no/play legislation mandates that students failing more than one course or those who are off-track toward graduation will be withheld from participation in sports, clubs, and organizations at a time when they need school involvement and a sense of belonging. In addition, statistics show that 24 percent of all at-risk students previously identified have already dropped out of school during the course of the semester due to failing grades, poor performance on standardized tests, discipline or attendance problems, or lack of interest in school (Chalker, 1990).

Secondary school educators must realize that "crisis intervention methods" give us the opportunity to deal with those students attaining the dropout age while at risk of not graduating. There is little time to make major reforms or changes in the educational delivery system as a whole or to reverse the effects of past failures in school. We must focus on the here and now and what we can do to assist the secondary school at-risk student towards graduation.

Assistance offered to students at risk must be in the form of support services and multidisciplinary group intervention. Through group and individual guidance coupled with counseling interventions and multidisciplinary teamwork, we can determine strategies and appropriate referrals for helping students with their personal, social, and academic problems.

Potential dropouts, typically students with limited academic ability, may have to face repeated failure with little opportunity to engage in other school activities that might afford them some sense of success. Elective pull-out programs for remediation and "no pass, no participate" policies give at-risk students little opportunity to increase life skills, self-esteem, interaction with others, and vocational preparation. The problem is not that increased core courses, time spent on school tasks, longer school days and years, and higher achievement standards are ineffective; rather, the problem is motivating students to spend additional time in academic courses, additional time on school tasks, and a longer period of time in school.

There are 45 identified factors characteristic of at-risk students with grade retainment, no/pass no/play, and remediation being the only factors imposed on students by the schools (Frymier, 1988). Without vocational or enrichment opportunities and extracurricular participation, many at-risk students become even more discouraged with their situation than they were before. It seems senseless to base student placement and participation on one or two factors when there are so many issues involved in the at-risk problem.

What is needed is a special provisional program that can meet during and after school without having to meet regular eligibility standards. Club V.I.C.T.O.R.Y. is just such a program. At-risk students can gain membership into this extracurricular club which gives them a sense of belonging something in which to be identified, offers them support and guidance in making the necessary personal, social and academic adjustments, and assists them with their problems and needs.

Through Club V.I.C.T.O.R.Y., OPERATION V.I.C.T.O.R.Y. hopes to utilize Program P.A.S.S. as a means of assisting students to achieve academic success, and The U.P.W.A.R.D. Program as a means of helping students deal with personal and social adjustment problems affecting academic achievement. Club V.I.C.T.O.R.Y. features a variety of attention-getting devices, motivational and academic awards for improvement and high achievement, group-centered activities and social events, and leadership opportunities for all members. In addition, many different strategies designed to implement the academic improvement oriented Program P.A.S.S. and the personal and social adjustment oriented U.P.W.A.R.D. Program will be shared as part of a presentation on Club V.I.C.T.O.R.Y. Many Program P.A.S.S. strategies focus on helping students to test out of the remedial program; regaining their electives and vocational courses, to regain eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities through grade improvement, and to get back on track toward promotion and eventually graduation. The U.P.W.A.R.D. Program strategies focus on self-esteem, leadership, problem-solving, life skills orientation, and future planning.

The Interdisciplinary Approach to Achieving Academic Excellence for At-Risk Students

Robert Conley, Josephine I. Cinaos and Joyce Morgan Baker

Our school is located within the Fort Worth Independent School District. We serve pregnant and parenting teens from throughout our county and, therefore, get students from all corners of the community. As such we get a wide variety of learning styles and abilities. During our years of teaching an at-risk population, we have all run across numerous methods for teaching students in the classroom. Most of these seem to have been developed as graduate papers and look good in theory, but fall short of expectations when used in a classroom setting. It was out of frustration with these so-called expert approaches that we sat down and developed our own method through trial and error in the actual classroom.

Many times we found ourselves combining classes on our own in order to take advantage of a particular topic, movie, or guest lecturer. We discovered that, on average, the students responded well to the new combination, and we began scheduling regular days of the week when we would choose a theme to present to larger groups of students. These combinations involved many teachers within the building and varied from week to week depending on who wished to participate at the time.

We were approached by our principal to develop a summer program for our pregnant and parenting students which would enable them to receive credit for two classes in a short period of time as well as to meet the minimum requirements as set forth by the Texas Education Agency's essential elements. Two of our groups had come from a business background while the third had good, diverse teaching expertise. Mr.

Conley worked for twelve years in banking, saw the poor quality of applicants coming from our educational system, and decided to get into teaching in order to have some input into the training of our youth. Ms. Baker had worked in retailing for seven years and in the hotel industry for four years and saw the same educational problems through her experiences. Ms. Cisneros had the most teaching experience, but had also been in retailing before that and witnessed the unprepared student in the real world. From this background we began our quest.

One of the main problems we had all encountered with our students was showing them that all of their subjects, although taught separately, really related to the other courses being taught throughout the school. It was hard for the students to carry thoughts from one class to the next because we, as teachers, tend to become very possessive of our own subjects and ignore the others. We realized that by doing this we teach the subconscious idea that history is relevant to history, math is relevant to math, and so forth. Never was there a connection being made between the areas of study. By compartmentalizing education we were actually saying to the student that real life is this way also. No wonder, then, that when teens graduate from school they are unprepared for the reality of life without the artificial boundaries of a typical classroom setting. It is easy to understand how a person may have trouble adjusting to higher level thinking and reasoning skills without having a firm grasp of how classes are interrelated. This is the difficulty faced by the average student. How confusing the world must then look to a student with an at-risk label attached to them as an added stigma with which to cope. It was our goal to remove these strict borders from the classroom and to show the pupils that each of their subjects was just another aspect of the same lesson - Dealing With Life.

The Fort Worth Independent School District, like many others nationwide, has offer-ed interdisciplinary classes for advanced placement students for many years. Mostly, this is used with American history and U.S. literature classes since they are the easiest and most logically combined of the course offerings. It is the purpose of these classes to teach interconnections but the enrollment is limited to students who are making grades leading us to believe that they are already making use of higher level thinking skills. Those who probably need more help in this area are blocked from classes because they don't possess the minimum grade requirements. It seemed to be a logical extension of this thought to not only expand the subjects approached through interdisciplinary classes, but to open them up for the pupils who will be required to face life and a job immediately after high school — the at-risk student.

After determining that this was the route which was to be taken in our development, we began researching the Texas essential elements for each course offering to see how they might be incorporated into an interdisciplinary approach to teaching. What we found was that the majority of the classes lent themselves perfectly to this concept. Our target for the first use of this concept among our students was to offer a class in which students actively participated in the development of a course which would be tailored for their specific needs and desires as well as allow the pupil to receive one semester of credit in any two of the following subjects: U.S. history, world history, geography, government, economics, english, art, consumer math, and journalism.

The original class ended up being a summer class composed of three teachers with varied expertise and a class of 50 students. Because of time restrictions on the number of hours required for a class to meet in order to receive credit under Texas guidelines, our rules were very simple. Students were only able to miss one class for the entire course. Any more than that would result in removal from the program. Three tardies of less than 10 minutes were considered an absence. We determined from the beginning to treat this course as if it were a job situation so that upon graduation students would be better prepared for the work atmosphere. We rang no bells and gave students the responsibility of getting into the class by use of the clock.

The class itself was conducted around a central theme of "Exploring the 20th Century," with a combination of lecture, cooperative learning, and field trips. There was very little emphasis on the textbook and much on research and current sources. Our desire was to place responsibility on the individual student and get away from the teacher/dictator orientation as much as possible. With this emphasis on responsibility we planned many field trips to be incorporated into the class. Since many of our at-risks have never been outside of their specific neighborhoods, these trips were focal points for many activities and writings. Much of the time on these trips, the teachers gave students maps and allowed them to conduct their own tours. Teachers were available and did observe activities but students made their own decisions on points to see and customized their own learning.

Within the classroom, grades were based on daily writing, discussions, and class participation. Students were also made responsible for contributing to the student produced magazine or video production. These were considered the final exam for each student. Through this type of class, not only were the pupils forced to use higher-level thinking skills, but they were exposed to various library resources, computers, and video cameras. This exposure tied into another aspect of the overall program which proved very beneficial to the students — preparing for tomorrow's workforce.

We dealt closely with businesses within the city which allowed us to visit their locations, sent guest lecturers, and gave important tips for preparing for real world expectations within the business community. This tied in very nicely with the Fort Worth ISD program entitled Project C3 — Corporations, Community, Classrooms, which has a goal of "working together to create a new educational system that prepares students to successfully handle the jobs, economic circumstances and life situations of the future." The benefits of this program have proven useful in that many students have been shown new possibilities for what is within their reach with completed educational goals.

The overall effects of this program were very successful. We received many compliments from students, administrators, businesses, and parents. As teachers, it was a pleasure to teach in this manner because it allowed us to give varied points of view for the students and showed them that not all teachers think alike. It also gave students a variety of teaching styles to choose from for their learning. Bookkeeping was not as difficult as might be expected and the atmosphere was very pleasant.

Even through the program was a great success, it should be noted that not everything worked as well as could be expected. We did not cure the problem of students dropping the program. We did lose many students to a basic lack of care about education, although we did see many students improve in their attendance. In fact, we had one student who had her baby on a Friday afternoon and returned the following Monday so as not to lose credit. Definitely a turnaround from previous behavior. The classroom was not your typical, quiet setting which many teachers seem to prefer. A buzz of talk abounded on most days, but we did get students to respect the right of others to talk when their turn came. It took a lot of coordination to pull all elements of the program together, and it helped to have three teachers who were like-minded in their desired results. The sharing of thoughts and experiences in the program was well worth the effort.

The program was successful enough that it was expanded into the regular school year, with many interdisciplinary classes added to the current schedule. Currently combined are U.S. literature/history, world literature/history, and middle school science/health. In the summer of

1991 a new rendition of the program will be offered and the theme will be "The 1990s: Preparing for the 21st Century." Science classes will be incorporated into this venture, along with the previously mentioned course offerings. A fourth teacher will join in the program and offer her expertise in biology, physical science, and health. As a means of teaching these sciences she will present information relevant to current newsworthy topics such as: "Environmental Terrorism in The Gulf War," "The Threat of Chemical Warfare: What Is It and How Is It Used?," "The Legacy of Ceausescu's Romania: Mental Illness and Its Treatments," and "The AIDs Crisis." The introduction of topics such as these should greatly enhance students' awareness of the world around them and the connections to their daily lives.

Beginning in August of 1991 our alternative school will be going to a year-around-format to be able to become even more creative in our curriculum. The school is also in the process of negotiating to have an historic house within the city limits donated to our school so that we may use it as a working project for students to get hands-on, practical skills as well as academic education. Being a derelict house, there is much work to be done to restore it to its original splendor. Our vision is to conduct classes at the house in the mornings and spend afternoons, using the practical application of what has been learned to renovate the home. With the final product, we hope to set up a home for some of our students who are literally living on the streets.

As in any program, we cannot say that this is the only way to reach students and must emphasize that this is just one additional tool which can be used to reach students whom others have written off. We are very proud of our accomplishments in this program and feel that it has proven successful enough that it could be used in any city as a means of dealing with at-risk students. The enthusiasm of the participants and the rising enrollment tend to support our optimism. Much of the drudgery of teaching has been removed from the classroom and students do more of the work, allowing the teacher to guide students more successfully in their search for the education best suited to them personally.

Changing Places: The At-Risk Student in the Touchstones Discussion Project

Eleanor Dougherty

The act of talking about something has a powerful effect. It is one of our most basic experiences and one that leads us to discover our world in ways that involve and engage us actively. Discussion, unlike talking or speechmaking, involves conscious and direct interpersonal experiences that move a person toward others. Discussion is a connective process that engages the mind and the senses through verbal and nonverbal cues. For these compelling reasons, discussion is one of the most important ways we learn and students of all abilities benefit when they learn to participate in discussion. The Touchstones Project was designed to develop in students those skills and behaviors necessary to participate in classroom discussion. At-risk students benefit through a process that creates the conditions where they can "change places" — that is, to exchange familiar, unproductive patterns of learning for new, participatory behaviors and thinking strategies.

For at-risk students, discussion offers access to the dynamics of the class that are not ordinarily available to them in traditional settings that employ lecture, silent reading and textbook exercises. Bobby is an example of an at-risk student, a repeating sophomore who attends a public high school in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He often says he is bored with school and finds reading difficult. He tends to skip school when tests are given, and his attendance is erratic at best. Bobby likes to talk however, and he feels he has a lot to share, especially about his dropout days in East Los Angeles and his struggles with the "outside." He comes to school, he says, because he likes to be around other kids.

For Bobby and others who struggle with school expectations, discussion offers a way to engage their minds without barriers that traditional classes seem to erect for them. For Bobby, sitting for long periods of listening to the teacher and taking notes demanded too much from him since his skills of listening and selecting out important information were not well developed. For other at-risk students, such as Anna, a bright but inattentive and impulsive junior, class time is "wasted time." She wants to write, but is frustrated by poor skills in reasoning and reflection and gives up when she gets low grades.

In a school, discussion can play a major role in providing a setting where these students can join higher-performing students on a more equal basis, since it is their experiences and insights that contribute to the progress of a discussion, not their poor skills in reading, writing, and test-taking. Moreover, the processes that are employed in guided discussion nurture the intellectual and behavioral skills all students need to acquire if they are to learn how to learn.

For at-risk students who learn through guided discussion those behaviors and intellectual strategies that permit them to participate, there are many rewards. For Bobby it meant, after a year of Touchstones classes, staying in school. He found through discussion classes skills that enabled him to listen, question, respond and cooperate. He began to work with his peers and teachers instead of against them. He passed his State Proficiency Exam and gained new confidence. For Anna, discussion gave her a forum for clarifying ideas. She became less timid and more assertive, and her writing improved as she practiced expressing herself and listening to others voice their opinions and insights. She went on to publish an essay in the school literary magazine.

What Happens In A Discussion?

When we convene to talk about something, we set into play a number of skills and attitudes. A true discussion moves past the mere exchange of ideas and into other realms. It involves not only a talking about something, but thinking about it, too. It creates connections between people; it effectually socializes people and forms relationships. A discussion involving readings also allows students to become more reflective and less dependent on teacher approval, and, in effect, creates the conditions for practicing and developing critical thinking skills.

The skills we need to bring to a discussion are not immediate or necessarily natural. They have to be learned. To begin with, an authentic discussion requires listening skills. To listen well means to suspend one's own "agenda" to understand what the speaker is saying and meaning to say. It is a processing of information, in a sense, that requires, for one, self-discipline and, for another, intellectual focus. The speaker must also learn to listen to the responses his remarks elicit.

Another skill we need to participate in discussion is expressiveness. To communicate our ideas well, we need to practice the ways we can best convey our meaning. This involves the speaker in exploring rhetorical formats and vocabularies. Continued involvement in discussion helps the participants understand nuances of quality and style when we use different approaches to getting our messages across to others. For example, I might find that merely explaining my point isn't working, but when I use an analogy my listeners seem to catch on to my meaning.

Discussion which examines ideas in literature (including all forms from poetry to mathematical proofs) will require students to find ways to be persuasive and convincing. Over time, they will learn to use their texts and regard literature as an ally and not a burden. They will begin to understand the processes behind research: for example, referencing, citation, and quotation.

Besides skills, students acquire attitudes which help them perform in a Touchstone Class as well as other classes. A most important attitude is tolerance. Through discussion students find that their ideas are not the only ones that can be supported and presented. They begin to realize that people who may be strangers can talk to them and offer them something useful, a new way of thinking about revenge, say, or Euclidian geometry. In school settings where discussion is practiced, students can learn to acknowledge those with whom they have never ventured to speak to in the halls. Hopefully, this revelation about a community of thinkers leads to tolerance.

Another attitude that discussions can nurture is responsibility. Students who share their ideas in a cooperative and trusting environment learn that discussion requires cooperation and trust — the trust that they can share a thought without retribution or fear of being exposed. They realize that expressed thoughts are part of a process of thinking about something and exploring options and that thoughts can be modified and changed. Students allow their peers this process of involvement with ideas and do not argue or "put down" their peers for expressing thoughts.

They also learn to be responsible not only for presenting their ideas in a way that promotes reception but for owning their ideas, weak or strong, right or wrong. If they do not fear rebuttal, they can leave the discussion for that day and move on. Perhaps, next time, they will try a new approach or completely change their stance. Each time, though, it is their responsibility to try to communicate their thoughts.

Eventually these skills and attitudes lead to a group dynamic that supports learning. The group begins to understand that together they can explore ideas and arrive at new ideas or that they can examine ideas with texts in ways that contribute to their own thought processes. This realization is the basis for scholarship and, of course, learning about our world.

The Touchstones Discussion Project

Luke is the star seventh grade student in an inner city Hartford School. Tom is failing and has not participated in any class for over four months. On this day, a regular class period is being used for a session of Touchstones. The seats are arranged in a circle instead of in rows. The format is not lecture or recitation, but a discussion of a short list of definitions from Euclid's *Elements*, a reading in *Touchstones*, Volume I. The teacher/leader asks what a straight line is, and Luke, as he always does, addresses his answer to the teacher: "A straight line is an infinite set of points with direction." A silence of almost 15 seconds greets his response.

Finally, Tom's voice enters the space the silence has opened. "Those aren't your words," he says, and after waiting a moment, asks his classmates what Euclid's definition of a straight line as "breadthless length" could mean. Luke, taken aback, remains quiet; other students enter the discussion. Eventually, Tom and Luke begin speaking with each other about whether one could ever see geometrical straight lines or only think about them.

The at-risk student, Tom, finds a place in this discussion and also relates to other students in ways he hadn't before. Discussion offers learning possibilities for all students, and already, discussion is common as we know in classes that deal with "issues." In academic classrooms, however, discussion is too often left out or occurs infrequently or in haphazard ways. This is because discussion requires specific skills in communication — verbal skills and behavioral skills — to benefit all participants and their learning. In order for students to conduct a discussion, they must learn to cooperate and to recognize the purposes and process of a discussion. This takes practice and direction.

The Touchstones Discussion Project was designed to create such conditions for learning discussion skills. Touchstones implements weekly 45-minute discussion classes for students in grades 7-12. Strategically selected texts are read in class and discussed. A two-page selection from, for example, Kant, Frederick Douglass, Christine Pisan or Lao Tsu is read aloud and silently. In each class, students write down questions, work in small groups to consider discussion strategies, and finally participate in a class discussion. By the end of the first year, students themselves design the class format, choose the text, and conduct the discussion. Students of all abilities and reading levels participate, from highly gifted to at-risk and special education students. Within the Touchstones format, all students possess strengths and weaknesses. It is, therefore, very useful for creating a cooperative learning environment for heterogeneous as well as homogeneous groups.

In this specially designed discussion format, student motivation toward school increases. In addition, students develop particular skills of questioning, listening, thinking, cooperating and teaching themselves. Since these skills are relevant to all classes, students transfer these skills to their work in subject-area classes.

Teachers who include discussion take on a different role than that of the teacher in a traditional class. Unlike the lecturer, the Touchstones leader/teacher assists students as a facilitator not as the source of knowledge. Students will not be used to, nor sometimes willing, to see the teacher in this new light. In discussion, they will turn to her for assurance or for "an answer." The teacher must resist the temptation to take on this familiar role and give the students permission to intellectually "move around" within a discussion. She assures them through nonverbal and verbal means that a discussion does not have to lead to her answer nor to her opinion. This can be a very real revelation to students.

In fact, this revelation can cause some students uneasiness, especially those who have learned the art of giving back answers, a method developed through years of answering questions at the back of textbooks. Students who have not found it easy to memorize answers in textbook chapters will find, on the other hand, that discussion can allow them the opportunity to join the class in ways they have never experienced. In time, the group works through these attitudes of insecurity and finds ways to value participation differently than in the question-answer system. What often happens is that the group learns to look at each other differently and to expect from everyone the possibility of contribution and participation. This promotes a new experience with the sharing and learning of ideas.

The Touchstones texts are short enough to read aloud so that reading ability is not a deciding factor in comprehension or, in participation. The texts were selected to elicit some idea useful for discussion, ideas which are familiar, yet unfamiliar or contradictory. For example, in a passage stating Newton's laws about gravity, students are urged to consider some kind of ideal experience as they think about Newton's laws and ask themselves, "Why is he making these claims in spite of everyone's experience?"

Touchstones discussions involve small group and large group activities. A 45-minute discussion without some variation will fail and be added to the list of "boring things we do in school." By using small group activities that can be brought back into a large group discussion, students who are not willing to talk in a large group can benefit. After a small group discussion, those students who weren't first willing to talk in a large group might eventually try expressing their thoughts with the group.

Since students learn in a Touchstones discussion the process of discussion, texts contribute to the discussion and provide a touchstone for discussion, but they do not become the focus of the learning experience. The teacher/leader, therefore, facilitates the discussion through a variety of techniques, sometimes, for example, using silence or pauses as part of the process, allowing the group to work out its own ways of moving the discussion from person to person. The teacher/leader might, at times, break in, to ask the students what they think about how the discussion is proceeding: "Who's talking and who's listening?" "What are the listeners doing while others are talking?" These moments focus the students on the process of involving themselves in discussion and the skills they need to do so. They also begin to understand the roles of listening and speaking, and each is mutually active and necessary.

During the year, students experience a progression of skills. The year proceeds from simple discussion settings to more complex ones, so that by the end of the year, students know the process as well as the teacher. By the end of the year, students are able to conduct a discussion without teacher involvement.

With these skills learned and practiced, students have a valuable tool for learning which will serve them well in school and later in the workplace and in their personal lives. The sharing of ideas, the interaction between a text and one's companions is what we mean when we talk about "learning for learning's sake." When students know that they all possess the skills to express themselves and to listen and share, they learn a confidence that other forms of education do not always promote.

Students in Pittsburgh who had completed a year of Touchstones commented on their experiences during the year as positive and useful. As one student said, "I like it when the teacher doesn't tell me the answers . . . I learned to say what I think, and I learned to express myself and to get along with people." During this final session, these students expressed their confidence and articulated their satisfaction with their new skills to each other and their teacher as they look forward to graduation.

Opening Flexibility Doors for High School Completion: The Success of Open Campus Night High Schools In Five Georgia School Systems

Kathryn Floyd

As the percent of our high school population who drop out hovers at almost 40 percent, the message that our current high school delivery system is failing to meet the needs of many adolescents becomes clearer and clearer. The facts are: Students retained one grade level have a 50-50 chance of finishing high school, whereas students who have been retained twice or more have a 10 percent change of finishing high school. As the educational attainment level of more and more of today's adolescents dips sharply, so do their prospects for an economically secure future. As that poorly prepared segment of our youth continues to increase in size and attain adulthood in the 21st century, the prospects for their being able to respond to the changing needs of employers decreases proportionately.

A multitude of dropout prevention efforts are aimed at prenatal, preschool, elementary, and middle school students. Many laudable efforts are being directed at preventing high school students from joining the ranks of those who have given up on the traditional high school program. Conceptualizing these dropouts as dissatisfied customers who refuse to buy the current high school program's "goods," allows us to entertain a variety of different delivery systems to target this "market." Market analysis shows that they have a different set of priorities; a primary one being to hold a job that will allow them to acquire the increasingly essential status symbol of youth — a car. Some students must drop out to help support a parent, brothers and sisters, a spouse, a spouse and a child, themselves in a single parent home, or an infant. Some drop out of high school to take a minimum wage job only to discover in a couple of years that the wages are woefully inadequate for their needs, let alone their wants. Often by then, many of their acquaintances in high school are also in a rather hopeless cycle of unemployment and dim future prospects.

It is highly unlikely that such a person will choose to return to an environment in which he found little success in the past and in which he now has few, if any, friends or acquaintances, perhaps no contemporaries. Those young people who have made some poor choices want to maintain the vestiges of their pride and dignity and will be unlikely to return to school with a student body which is younger, committed to school, and disdainful of those who fail.

The remainder of this article will identify commonalities and differences of five Open Campus Night High Schools that have begun operating in Georgia over the last three years. Hopefully, other school systems will recognize the simplicity with which such immediately successful high school dropout recovery and prevention programs can be initiated within or between school systems.

What is the mission and purpose of the Open Campus Night High Schools?

These open campus night high schools exist to serve the needs of high school students who cannot or choose not to remain in a regular high school program. Their mission complements the traditional high school program and ensures the opportunity for success to students who are unlikely, for a variety of reasons, to reach their potential in a traditional setting. These open campus night high schools provide opportunities for students to "buy back" into the educational system and to become upstanding, contributing members of society. The programs are based on the conviction that each student possesses the ability to become a self-confident, independent learner. The schools strive to enable each student to experience a sense of accomplishment, a feeling of belonging, and confidence in setting goals and making choices.

These open campus night high schools prevent many students from dropping out. Students who are regular full time students in the traditional day but are "off-track" and/or behind are permitted to take one or more courses concurrently at the open campus night high schools. By taking one or two courses at the open campus high schools during this "7th Period," these students are often able to complete their high school graduation requirements with their regular high school graduating class. This serves as a powerful dropout deterrent! Even those open campus high schools which have been open only a few months can already identify several students who will graduate on time.

Additionally, the open campus night high schools recover many high school dropouts who find the adult atmosphere comfortable; both dropouts and potential dropouts are accorded adult privileges and are accountable for adult decisions and conduct.

What is the location of the five schools?

Gwinnett County Schools opened their Open Campus Night High School at Meadowcreek High School in January, 1988; in August of 1990 the school was relocated to Norcross High School. Carroll County Schools opened their Open Campus Nigh High School at Central High in August, 1989. Dalton City and Whitfield County School systems opened their joint Open Campus Night School on the Dalton College campus in August of 1990. Rome City and Floyd County also opened their joint Night School at Armuchee High in August of 1990. In October of 1990 Glynn County Schools opened the Glynn County High School on the Glynn Academy campus in Brunswick.

How are the schools governed?

Carroll County, Glynn County, and Gwinnett County Open Campus Night High Schools are governed by the sponsoring system. The Rome City/Floyd County Open Campus Night School is governed by Floyd County Schools. Dalton City/Whitfield County Open Campus School is governed by a six-member board, three from each system.

Who may attend the Open Campus Night High Schools?

Although some of the open campus night high schools restrict their admissions to students from within the sponsoring system, most accept any student from the surrounding systems who has attained the age of 16 or who has attended high school for at least one year. Most of the five schools report the average age to be approximately 18, the youngest as 16, and the oldest as in the mid-50s. Some of the schools restrict regular day high school students from transferring to the open campus night high school programs unless there are strong recommendations from the applying student's home school counselor or administrator and the student's parents. Some of the schools restrict students who have been suspended from the regular day school from enrolling in the open campus programs until their suspension has expired.

What does it cost to attend the Open Campus Night High Schools?

The schools are funded by FTE (Full Time Equivalency) counts and tuition fees; some are supplemented by local system(s) funds. Most of these five schools charge a tuition fee of $85-90 for regular, full-time students in a traditional day high school program who are taking a "7th Period" course. Others charge also for students over 21 years of age and out-of-state students, neither of which is eligible to earn FTE funds. Local businesses, agencies, individuals, and civic organizations make contributions to a scholarship fund in some of these schools to offset the financial barrier to those who are unable to pay. Most of the schools charge a one-time $25 book deposit which is refunded when a student graduates, transfers, or withdraws.

What are the graduation requirements?

All of the five schools require their students to meet the same graduation requirements as all other Georgia high school graduates — 21 units — as well as additional local system requirements. One of the schools requires only 20 units of students who entered the ninth grade prior to the 1977-78 school year; the core requirements remain the same, only one less elective is required. Some of the schools offer sufficient classes so that students can obtain Georgia's College Preparatory Seal. Other schools offer the other two diploma endorsement as well — general and vocational. One school offers classes only for the general endorsement diploma. All schools require their students to pass the Basic Skills Test as mandated by the state and any additional requirements of the system. The five schools use the same course guides and adopted texts as their regular daytime counterparts.

What is the class schedule?

Classes are two hours and five minutes in length and meet Monday through Thursday. The day has only three periods, beginning from 3-3:45 p.m. and ending at 10-10:35 p.m.. The school calendar closely parallels that of the regular day school. However, the school year is divided into four, nine-week mini-mesters; students earn .5 Carnegie units for each class successfully completed. Students may elect to take one, two, or three periods. Those students who attend the Open Campus school during the regular academic calendar from August till June and who attend all three periods each of the four, nine-week mini-mesters may earn Carnegie units at the same rate as their daytime counterparts in the regular high school.

How are these schools staffed?

All five of the schools have some instructional personnel who come to teach one or two classes after their full-day assignments. Other teachers are recruited from retired teachers, those from adjacent counties, or locally certified, but unemployed teachers who desire part-time employment. Such teachers are paid an hourly rate, based on the state salary schedule, excluding any supplements. The largest and oldest school — Gwinnett — has some teachers who are contracted to work solely for the Open Campus to teach three classes per day; such teachers are on the same salary/benefit schedule as are all other Gwinnett teachers. (Department chairpersons are given one period for planning and department responsibilities.) All teachers in all schools are certified. Each of the schools has a principal/director, a secretary/clerk, a full-time or half-time counselor, and a media special-ist or access to a media center.

To what resources do these schools have access?

Although administrative and instructional supplies are handled separately, all schools located on regular high school campuses are able to utilize those facilities, equipment, media resources and, to some extent, textbooks. Dalton/Whitfield utilizes the campus media equipment and resources and the three sponsoring high schools' media resources and textbooks.

What are other distinguishing characteristics of these schools?

Most of the schools identify small class size, averaging 8-18 students, as important in enabling the students to get the personal attention needed for success. Not only do the teachers provide individualized academic instruction, but they often become "life-lines" for many students who come from non-functional families. The size of the school also allows the principal, counselor, and other staff members to keep track of the students and to offer encouragement and guidance to the students who encounter environmental problems. Significant also is the personal support system of students who share similar experiences and who have similar needs.

Teachers in the open campus night high school classes report the joy they feel in teaching students who are choosing to attend school and who demonstrate a high degree of motivation. Equally significant to the teachers is the fact that they encounter almost no discipline problems.

Counselors report an observable increase in self-esteem and delight that the small classes enable them to offer personalized guidance in the areas of social adjustment, academic adjustment, and career planning, based on each student's academic and family background.

Success is evident almost immediately! Students who lack only 1.5 units can complete their high school requirements in the first nine-weeks of operation. Students who are "off-track" only one unit can be back "on track" in one or two nine-week mini-mesters; this is a powerful incentive for many of them to stay in school and finish.

Students and parents report a renewed sense of hope at reclaiming parts of their dreams for the future, dreams they thought they had given up. Students frequently earn high grades, even Honor Roll, due to their motivation, their application, and the individualized attention possible in small classes of well-behaved students.

Are there other rules that these schools have in common?

Students must provide their own transportation.

Class attendance is required; only four absences per mini-mester are allowed. Schools vary in strictness with which they are able to apply this rule/guideline. Certainly poor attendance in the past frequently was a major contributing factor in the students' lack of academic success.

A student who completes all high school graduation requirements at the open campus schools may receive a diploma from his/her home school or from the open campus high school.

Are there other unique aspects of these programs?

The Carroll County school offers co-op programs with the Carroll County Vocational High School, Carroll Tech, or West Georgia College.

Dalton/Whitfield is jointly operated by an agreement between two systems who are arch rivals in athletics. The Dalton/Whitfield students are able to cross-enroll in vocational courses offered by Dalton College, the location of the open campus high school. The added prestige of attending school "at the college" and of not attending a high school previously viewed as an arch rival enables students to more readily overcome the stigma of going back to the site of previous failure.

Glynn County's Open Campus Night High School offers a unique Night Child Care Center. This serves both as an educational experience for some high school students as an elective course, as well as benefiting the community by offering night care for young children of students who attend the school.

Gwinnett began a Merit Program in 1990-91 for those students more than one year behind their graduation timetable. A team of three teachers (language arts, science, and social studies) guides them through some regular classes, directly teaches them in others, and attempts to give them even more individualized attention than they would receive elsewhere; this includes counseling and guidance in social skills and help with personal problems. Gwinnett plans to absorb the county's Adult Education Program, to examine doing the same to its Alternative Program for students disciplined out of their home schools and to begin a Teen Parenting Program.

Who do I contact at any of these schools for more details?

Carroll County Open Campus Night High School
David Wiggins, Director
Virginia Wysong, Counselor
% Central High School
113 Central Road
Carrollton, GA 30117
1-404-834-3386

Dalton/Whitfield Open Campus School
Kathryn Floyd, Director
129 Sequoya Hall
Dalton College
Dalton, GA 30720
1-404-272-4450

Glynn County Open Campus High School
Marsha Boney, Director
% Glynn Academy
1000 Monck Street
Brunswick, GA 31520
1-912-267-4127 or 4128

Gwinnett County Open Campus High School
Robert Campbell, Principal
Irv Zisselman, Assistant Principal
% Norcross High
600 Beaver Ruin Road
Norcross, GA 30071
1-404-921-5265 or 5164

Rome/Floyd Open Campus Night High School
Gary Kilgore, Director
Ellen Justus, Counselor
% Armuchee High
4203 Martha Berry Highway, NW
1-404-236-1844

Student Assistance Programs: Getting It All Together For Kids and Families

Joan L. Moen

Five years ago we said "an education for every American child," but we have failed to realize this dream. Our national dropout rate is 26 percent; those children are on the streets and they are angry and disillusioned; 2 million of our children are runaways or throw-aways; 5.3 million are problem drinkers; over one-half of all kids in single parent families live in poverty. In my state, at least 20 percent of our school children leave for school each day from a home where at least one parent suffers from alcohol or other drug abuse. The American Dream! One recent study indicated that students are for the first time in history citing teachers as the most important influence in their lives, but many teachers are overwhelmed with the task of trying to teach children whose needs are so great. In the 1980s, in response to this growing crisis, schools found it necessary to begin to rethink their roles.

One of the promising, even exciting outcomes was a model of service delivery that promotes a partnership between schools, parents and the community — the Student Assistance Program. While there are several SAP models in use today, I believe the school-based, K-12 broad brush model, offering services to students and families experiencing any kind of problem, is the most appropriate and will best serve the needs of today's schools, children and families. Major components of a successful Student Assistance Program will include strong board of education and administrative support; a firm, fair, clearly communicated and consistently enforced board policy; local needs assessment; an advisory committee of school, parents and community members, training for all school employees, in-school support groups, and on-going program evaluation. In addition, on-going parent support, education and networking need to be an integral part of an SAP along with establishing strong links to community agencies that serve children and families. Schools must not attempt to solve the problems alone! It can't be done.

What is the Student Assistance Program? The most common definition is: an early identification and referral system for students having school performance problems which may or may not be alcohol- or other drug-related. Criteria for referral are grades, attendance, appearance, and behavior; all easily accessible information in the school setting. Using an SAP referral card, school staff are encouraged to refer students they are concerned about. Parents are encouraged to refer, also. Once referred, a child is screened, data is collected and the school's screening committee makes a decision about appropriate in-school or community services. The heart of most SAPs is in-school support groups co-facilitated by trained school staff. Here children have the opportunity to learn to deal with a variety of issues — divorce, depression, issues around alcohol and other drugs, grief and loss — in a healthy way and in a safe place. They are taught skills in peer refusal, decision-making, social interaction, conflict resolution and alcohol and other drug information.

The groups, which meet weekly throughout the school year, appear to have great impact on participants, often after only several sessions. Data collected as part of a state grant indicated that students who attended regularly were able to increase grade point average, decrease problem behaviors, and increase knowledge of survival skills. At the secondary level, the use of alcohol and other drugs was down significantly although alcohol use was still at an unacceptably high level. However, groups must not be our only option. Some children aren't ready for a group experience; they may need to see a counselor, social worker, psychologist on a one-to-one basis. Perhaps the situation requires a referral for family therapy, or a special education assessment. The student may benefit from linkage to a trained peer helper. Lack of staff resources and/or funding often calls for creativity on our part as we seek a variety of ways to meet the needs of children and families. As always, we must be especially sensitive to the privacy of student and family.

An area of increasing concern, and rightly so, is the arena of legal issues. Do we need parent permission to provide services to children? Does district policy protect staff who operate under its guidelines? Can students receive community services without parent consent? These issues need to be resolved locally in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations.

Training is a critical component of any AOD prevention/intervention program and has proven to be an on-going need. All district employees, board members, and administrators need awareness training to enable them to support the program. Employees, of course, must be alert to students who are experiencing problems and be knowledgeable of possible resources for them. SAPs are coordinated by teams that require still another level of training which will enable them to plan appropriate prevention and intervention strategies for their building. Those staff members who will co-facilitate support groups will require training in group process and group facilitation skills. As programs mature there is always a call for advanced level training on issues such as grief and loss, sexuality, system resistance, etc..

The positive energy produced when staff members come together in a Student Assistance Program contributes to a real sense that we can make a difference; a sense of accomplishment. Our SAP teams will be effective to the extent that we provide the skills, information, and resources to allow them to function as a healthy and productive unit.

I spoke earlier about parent involvement. Those of us who work in the schools need to look at this issue carefully. Do we really want parents involved with us in the education of their children? All parents? Regardless of education, color, socioeconomic status, language proficiency? Are we willing to reach out to parents who have had bad experiences with school? How far will we reach? How sensitive will we be to the different needs of all our parents? Will we provide transportation and baby-sitting to those who need them? Will we make sure through written acknowledgment, that parents will have different levels of involvement with us and is that okay? Some parents will attend school- sponsored events, be school volunteers, will serve on our task forces, advisory councils and long-range planning committees. Some, when they learn that our goals and theirs for their child are exactly the same, will let us visit their homes to discuss their child's education. Others will talk with us by phone when we call. A barometer of our desire for parent involvement in the future will be a telephone in every classroom.

To the extent that we have board and administrative support, a clear and consistently enforced policy, a clean and clear written referral system, and that we can honor the SAP team process and offer a variety of in-school and community services to children and families, our efforts will be successful.

The old systems simply did not serve troubled kids very well. Too many of them fell through the cracks because everyone thought somebody else was doing something. And students thought nobody was doing anything! We can make a difference. Do we have a choice? Will we have another chance?

A Reason to Stay: Involving At-Risk Students in School Activities Programs

Lee A. Montgomery

Alienation from school activities has long been a major identifying characteristic of at-risk youth. An information review of the ERIC literature produced more than 60 studies which cited lack of participation in school activities as a part of the profile of students who fail to complete their schooling. Similarly, evidence which suggests links between participation in extra-curricular activities and achievement is abundant.

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement surveyed a national sample of high school students and reported that participants in extracurricular activities achieved higher grades than non-participants (Sweet, 1986). McNamara, Haensley, Lupkowski and Edlind (1985) identified a positive correlation between the level of participation in student organizations and grade point average. Camp (1990) utilized the *High School and Beyond* sophomore data set to examine the relationship between student participation in extracurricular and cocurricular activities and student achievement. His findings suggest that academic achievement is enhanced by participation in these activities and raises questions about current reform movement trends to exclude academically marginal students from participation. Cheong, Toney, and Stinner (1986) concluded that participation in school activities was positively related to achievement and Harvancik and Golson's (1986) study of 1,067 college freshmen identified a positive correlation between participation and grade point average.

While student activities are generally recognized to be an important part of the secondary school experience, students at risk seldom take advantage of these benefits of participation. A problem which has traditionally faced those who work with at-risk youth has been involving students who just do not seem to want to be involved. Moreover, barriers to participation beyond the control of the at-risk student often prevent involvement of those who do wish to participate. This paper will explore strategies for increasing the involvement levels of at-risk students and for eliminating many of the barriers that inhibit participation. In addition, guidelines for implementing and operating an effective school activities program will be presented.

To fully understand why at-risk youth seldom participate in school activities, it is necessary to be aware of the motives of students who do. Vornberg and others (1981) identified six principal reasons for involvement in student activities. The researchers reported that students participate because activities:

1. Provide fun for personal enjoyment
2. Promote self-achievement
3. Develop leadership abilities
4. Allow participants to serve their school
5. Extend personal or social contacts
6. Prepare one to become an effective citizen, and
7. Provide learning experiences not available in regular classroom programs

Less frequently cited reasons for participating in activities included getting one's picture in the school yearbook and meeting teachers' expectations. Reasons for not participating included conflicts with after-school work, lack of relevance to needs and interests, domination of activities by cliques and social groups, and the difficulty involved in being selected or elected.

Buser, Long, and Tweedy (1975) suggest

that these and other considerations constitute barriers to participation which must be overcome by students who wish to become involved in school activities. These barriers may include prohibitive costs, grade restrictions, lack of transportation to after-school activities, lack of interest on the part of faculty sponsors, uninteresting and limited options, parental disapproval, and a lack of awareness of available activities.

Given the socioeconomic background of many at-risk students, the costs of participation may constitute a formidable barrier. Evans and Wagner (1971) observed that many high school students are barred from participating in some student activities simply because they cannot afford to do so. In light of the benefits of self-esteem and achievement inherent to participation, it may all be that students who can least afford school activities are the ones who need them most. Thompson and Nelson (1983) recommended a direct approach to removing the cost barrier: *Remove "hidden" costs of education. One of the chief causes of dropping out of school is the lack of adequate financial resources for books, student tickets, dances, yearbooks, class rings and the like. Many students feel they cannot pay these fees and, to avoid embarrassment, leave school. Therefore, if the schools are to be really "free," they should assume all costs (p. 203).*

The practicality of this solution in many of the nation's financially strapped school districts is somewhat questionable. Yet, through careful planning and sound management, the student costs of participation in school activities can be kept within reach of virtually all students. Schools might, for instance, seek "angels" or benefactors for special interest activities. Partnerships with professional associations, business and industry and philanthropic individuals, and foundations could help make participation more attainable. Booster clubs and spirit organizations might also provide a source of supplemental income. Work-study programs might serve as a model for yet another approach. A student with limited financial resources might "work off" band instrument rental fees, for example, through acting as the band director's assistant. Such an arrangement would circumvent the lowered self-esteem endemic to participating through acts of charity. Similarly, "scholarships" for talented student actors, artists and writers might offset material costs for these activities and provide membership fees for associated clubs and organizations.

The barrier of grade restrictions has become increasingly prominent in the wake of recent educational reform movements. The "no pass, no play" and the "C average" restrictions imposed by local and state school boards exclude many academically marginal students from participation. The rationale for these exclusions is questionable and not supported by the literature. Rather than being detrimental to academic achievement, participating in student activities seems to have a positive relationship to grades (Camp, 1990; Cheong, Toney and Stinner, 1985). Removal of this barrier requires a rethinking on the part of state and local policymakers. The potential benefits offered to students at risk by participation in extracurricular activities should not be curtailed by political agendas or misguided reform.

Elimination of the barrier of parental disapproval also lies in a shift in thinking. Parents should be made aware of the benefits of participation and their support for activities aggressively pursued. To this end, practices such as providing complimentary tickets to school activities, public relations campaigns and activities-oriented "open houses" may prove beneficial. Sometimes a source of parental disapproval may be that activities are scheduled at a time when their child is needed at home for chores or to provide child care for siblings. A flexible schedule sensitive to the needs of students who work or who are needed at home may make participation more accessible. Many districts have resolved this difficulty through setting aside a portion of the regular school day for school activities. Another potential source of difficulty may be lack of transportation for after-school activities. Some districts have resolved this problem by budgeting funds or "activities buses" either through use of local incomes or through federal block grants. Student car pools, volunteer parent-driven "taxis" and other creative approaches might also prove effective and easily implemented.

Options which are limited and uninteresting or which do not address the interests and needs of at-risk students pose still another barrier to participation. Developing links between individuals and the activities offered is an essential task in overcoming this barrier. In planning activities to meet the unique needs of the at-risk student, three key questions should be addressed: 1) Who is not participating, 2) Why is this student not participating, and 3) What needs or interests can we address to help this student become involved? Often, student surveys or personal interviews are the best sources for answers to these essential questions. Once identified, it is usually relatively easy to match students to existing activities or to conceptualize new programs to meet unaddressed interests and needs.

Another barrier may result from lack of interest on the part of activity sponsors. This issue is best approached through selection, compensation, and training. Vornberg and Zukowski (1981) found selection of activities' sponsors by the principal to be the method of choice in once third of the 102 schools they surveyed. A combination of principal selection and faculty volunteers was utilized in approximately one third of the schools while 15 percent reported using these methods coupled with student nominations. Sponsors were compensated with extra salary in over half of the schools while 23.6 percent reported either reduced class loads or other means of indirect compensation. No training was provided for activity sponsors in more than 60 percent of the schools surveyed. This lack of training has serious implications. Given the importance of school activities and the holding power these activities exert on students at risk, sponsors should be selected, trained and compensated as rigorously as teachers in academic programs. A prime consideration in selection should be the sponsor's ability to interest, recruit and motivate students.

Lack of awareness, the final barrier, is probably the most readily remedied. An effective awareness campaign might include an activities orientation and recruiting fair at the beginning of each semester, school media campaigns, and "get involved" assemblies. "Bounties" in the form of free or reduced tickets to school events might be offered to students who sign up for clubs and organizations. The aid of more active students might be enlisted to help recruit new participants and to get them involved. Brainstorming by student government and the student activities council should produce an almost unlimited repertoire of alternatives.

Once barriers to participation have been eliminated, it is vital to develop a systematic approach to the operation of a school activities program which will meet the needs of students at risk. Of central importance to such a plan is a sound educational philosophy which addresses the role of student activities in achieving both broad based goals and specific learning objectives. Such a philosophy should focus on the identified needs and interests of at-risk students and should emphasize providing a broad range of extracurricular experiences for all students. In addition, guidelines should be established to maximize student involvement. A model set of guidelines might include the following, drawn from the literature:

1. Activities programs should focus on student needs and interests and be managed in a way that will make them available to all students.

2. Policies for school activities which limit direct and incidental costs to students should be established by the school board.

Required or expected expenses such as yearbooks, membership dues and uniforms merit special attention.

3. An activities council or board made up of students, parents and faculty should be established to review and screen proposed activities on the basis of objectives, costs and needs.

4. A director of student activities should be responsible for program coordination and evaluation. In small school settings, the principal might be expected to play this role.

5. Activity sponsors should be recruited and appointed by the director after screening by the activities council.

6. School resources including appropriated funds and money raised by total school effort should be used to support basic needs of existing programs or as "seed money" to development new ones.

7. An annual budget should be developed for all activities under the supervision of the director. All expenditures should be made using standard school accounting procedures. An annual audit of income and expenditures should be conducted.

8. A formal evaluation of the activities program should be conducted annually. Involvement levels of at-risk students should be an important evaluative criterion.

Regardless of how well thought out and managed a school activities program may be, the "proof of the pudding" is the level of student involvement it generates. A significant barometer of success should be a count of students at risk who have used school activities as a springboard to beat the odds of dropping out. In a society where every individual is precious and important, the school can ill afford to allow students to fall through the cracks due to lack to involvement or a sense of not belonging.

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School Initiatives That Make A Difference

Cheryl D. Deaton and Jamie Blair

Introduction

According to the Phi Delta Kappa Study of Students At Risk, children are at risk if they are likely to fail either in school or in life. Examples are failure of a grade in school or physical, sexual, or drug abuse in life. "Failure — in school or in life — is evidence that a youngster is at risk" (Frymier and Gainsneder, 1989). In the 1960s, at-risk students would have been classified as disadvantaged or minority. The terms used to describe their condition have changed, largely in an attempt to avoid any generalizations about race or ethnicity.

The percentage of children in the United States that can be counted as at risk is growing rapidly. Of the 22,018 students in 276 schools involved in the PDK At-Risk survey, between 25 percent and 35 percent were found to be seriously at risk. Because of difficulty gathering complete data on all 22,018 students, the director of the PDK survey considers these percentages to be very conservative. Why are these numbers growing? Levin (1987) cites three reasons for the increasing numbers of children that can be classified as at risk. First, the birth rate in disadvantaged populations has been historically higher than in other populations. Second, the waves of legal and illegal immigrants have grown significantly since the turn of the century. Last, the number of children living in poverty (many with a female head of household) is steadily growing. Of course, at-risk students are potential school dropouts. According to recent data, the dropout rate for at-risk students approaches 50 percent (Levin). According to Robert DeBlois (1989), founder of an educational program for at-risk inner-city students, dropouts share several characteristics. By the seventh grade, they are two or more years behind their peers in reading and math skills, have failed a grade at least once, have a high absentee rate, have lost self-esteem, and do not participate in school activities.

How are America's public schools dealing with a student population of which no less than one-third can be classified as at risk? For over a quarter of a century, the at risk child spent large amounts of time in a variety of compensatory programs such as Chapter I. These programs, originally designed for the minority or disadvantaged child, are often remedial in nature and stress the hierarchical development of basic skills. The underlying premises of such programs are 1) that certain skills are "basic" and must be mastered before more "advanced" work can be tackled; and, 2) that these skills can and should be taught one at a time, often in isolation from the activity to which the skills relate, such as reading a story, writing a poem, thinking through a new mathematics problem (Knapp and Shields, 1990). But, assuming mastery of the material presented, the student moves into the next level of the hierarchical skills continuum. The breadth and scope of the learning process do not change; only the skill being presented.

No one can question the successes of programmed learning, computer-assisted instruction, mastery learning, and even basal textbook programs achieved by breaking knowledge down into small, easily digested bits of information. The merits of this type of learning are easy to see. Learning can be quickly achieved, success can be applauded, and progress to the next place in the skills continuum can occur rapidly. But, this kind of learning may, in effect, actually retard rather than enhance the progress of at-risk students.

The recent emphasis on school restructuring has served to call into question the passage from one discrete unit of information to another as the primary mode of instruction for at-risk youth. Several problems with such an approach bear discussion. As in "The Case of Billy Charles Barnett" (Barone, 1989), school and the world of Billy Charles do not overlap. The students see no relevance to their school curriculum. They see no connection between school and real life.

Sequential skills-based programs insure only a minimal education. There is no time to develop a student's analytical or conceptual abilities. Attention is typically limited to the student's passage of some type of basic competency test. This in itself implies the acceptance of, at best, an education mired in mediocrity. It also communicates low expectations for the students and, perhaps, these expectations determine the depth of a child's learning.

A skilled teacher knows the students better than the textbook publisher or the packager of commercial curricula. Every teacher needs some freedom in determining the course of learning in the classroom, the freedom to build upon the interests of the students and accentuate their strengths. Such freedom corresponds with the next point. Teachers too often become burned-out or disenchanted with their role as educators. Traditional curriculum models provide teachers with limited decision-making authority over what to teach in their classrooms. Such freedom is necessary if teachers are to bring their best efforts and abilities to class each day.

Likewise, students should not be told everything they should learn. Students need some flexibility in determining the course of their own learning. After all, isn't teaching how to learn, rather than what to learn, one of the purposes of education? If we agree with this tenant, then we must provide students with opportunities to chart their own course of learning.

Rather than scaling down the educational programs for at-risk youth, the restructuring movement has brought forth the concept of an expanding curriculum. As DeBlois puts it (1989), "We must show them their possibilities rather than their limitations." As Gallagher (1983) noted, "If you don't get a chance to come to bat, you don't get a chance to hit." By embracing such a philosophy, the curriculum provided for at-risk children should be designed to maximize learning. It should be accelerated, rather than slow and cautious. The curriculum should be more challenging and engaging, and less routine and redundant.

Within this framework should exist an array of special programs and activities aimed at helping at-risk students participate more directly in their own learning. By providing students the opportunity to experience learning firsthand, students feel more ownership of their education; and, at the same time, realize that learning can be fun.

At-risk students must be motivated to learn. School must be a place that is exciting and enticing. Non-traditional activities must be coupled with traditional activities to provide experiences outside the realm of the classroom. These programs and activities can accomplish a variety of goals. Among them is a developing consciousness within the children of the senses of identity, trust, cooperation, pride, unity, and achievement. At-risk students need to be validated first as human beings, then as learners.

Initiatives That Work

American Heritage Week helps students tap their creative spirit while bringing history alive. Students are allowed to experience history firsthand and thus make it come alive. By studying our country's history in the context of its development, children can more clearly understand and appreciate our heritage. Each of the grade levels housed at the school develops a four-week multidisciplinary unit around its given historical period.

As the culminating event, the school organizes a five-day extravaganza of interrelated activities centering on the periods of history being studied. Each grade level is assigned one day to share what has been learned. Students demonstrate their knowledge by presenting skits, reciting poetry, singing, performing dances, and displaying arts and crafts characteristic of the assigned time period. Students and staff dress in costumes typical of the era being studied.

As a finale, a Village Fair featuring early American crafts and games is held. Tents are pitched on the school grounds under which local artisans and craftsmen exhibit blacksmithing, roping, scrimshaw, macrame, folk art, woodcutting, stenciling, butter churning, quilting, basketry, pottery making, and embroidery (Deaton, 1990).

The Visiting Author Program is a continuing project aimed at exposing students to literature through contact with highly recognized authors of children's books. Initially an individual school project, all six schools (K-5) within the school system now participate. The project ensures that over 2,500 students have the opportunity to take a personal glimpse into the author's world each year. Students see the author as a creative person who is influenced by background, family and friends. Students see that not all experiences which affect people are positive. Yet, they see that this combination of both the good and bad experiences impacts a person's life. Most often, it is this core of experiences upon which authors draw to develop their works (Deaton and Meadows, 1990). Listed below are the visiting artists and their works:

Faye Gibbons (1985), author of *Some Glad Morning* and *Close to Heaven*;

Olivia Solomon (1986), author of *Zichary Zan* and *Ghosts and Goosebumps*;

Alan Tiegreen (1987), illustrator for Beverly Cleary's books;

Doris Buchanan Smith (1988), author of *Kelly's Creek* and *Last was Lloyd*;

Margaret Searcy (1989), author of *Wolf Dog of the Woodland Indians* and *Ikwa of the Temple Mounds*;

Patricia McKissack (1990), author of *Flossie and the Fox*, *Nettie Jo's Friends*, and *Mirandy and Brother Wind*; and

Barbara Robinson (1991), author of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*.

Storybook Week provides children with the opportunity to "participate" in good literature. Many children are unaware of the riches books hold for them. During Storybook Week, each classroom selects its favorite story or book. Numerous activities related to the books or stories are planned. These may include creative writing, art or music activities, choral readings, and dramatizations. The entire school and community is involved in Storybook Week. One day during the week, food service personnel select their favorite story and prepare a special Storybook Meal. On yet another day, "Special Guest Readers" such as local government officials, business men and women, high school and university athletes, and parents are invited to give book talks and read stories or exerpts from books. Finally, on "Dress-up Day," all students, faculty, and staff members dress as a favorite storybook character. The week's ultimate goal is to help students develop a lifelong love for reading. The goal is being met.

A *System of Rewards* can go a long way toward encouraging at-risk students to do their best. Every Friday, a student from each classroom is selected for Principal's Club. Principal's Club members eat lunch with the principal at a special table decorated with flowers, tablecloth, and silverware. Each Principal's Club member receives a red ribbon designating membership in the club. Monthly rewards are held for students who meet minimum behavior criteria. This year's reward activities include: Halloween carnival, trip to Bowl-A-Matic, dance and refreshments, outside day of fun games, picnic, and Christmas crafts. Academic achievement is also recognized. Students earning all A's and B's, all B's, and all A's during the quarter are invited to partake of a snack with the principal. Perhaps Awards Day best exemplifies our attempt to encourage students. Each academic year, students participate in a variety of contests and activities. Additionally, progress in a variety of categories is charted. Altogether, over 800 certificates in 24 categories are awarded to the 300 students attending the school.

Summary

In summary, the process of seeking new and better educational programs to meet the needs of at-risk children is no easy task. Cooperation and commitment within and among all elements of the school and community at-large are essential if successful initiatives for meeting the needs of at-risk students are to be implemented. It is within the power of the people involved in the educational system at this very moment to envision and implement the most effective and relevant educational programs for all children, particularly those at risk.

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An Experimental Reading and Writing Course for At-Risk Students

Patricia T. Price and Margaret McLaughlin

Georgia Southern University is a rapidly growing, predominantly rural regional university with an enrollment of approximately 12,000 students. Between 1984 and 1990 enrollment at GSU has more than doubled; however, about 1,000 students — approximately one-third of the present freshmen class — have been admitted provisionally to the university. They are at-risk students because of low SAT or ACT scores, and/or because they have not achieved a high school GPA of 2.0.

Before provisionally admitted students are permitted to enroll in university classes, they must first attain a C average in developmental courses; then they are eligible to take the state-mandated College Placement Exams (CPE), standardized reading and English basic skills tests. If developmental studies students cannot achieve a 76 percent on the CPE at the end of the quarter, they may continue to enroll in developmental studies courses for a maximum of four quarters before they are excluded from the university.

As professional educators, we feel accountable for our students' success on these examinations, which determine so much of their academic future, but we also feel responsible for providing our students with more academically rigorous work than simply "teaching to the test" with five-paragraph themes and reading and grammar workbook exercises. We are interested in an approach to reading and writing that encourages introspective interpretation of texts and thoughtful approaches to writing assignments.

Because we believe that the theory supporting David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky's sequenced reading/writing course curriculum described in *Facts, Artifacts, and Counterfacts* is sound, we have adapted and modified their semester model to circumstances required by the quarter calendar and preparation for standardized exit examinations. During the fall quarter, 1990, we have team-taught an experimental modification of the Bartholomae/Petrosky method to one class of 30 developmental studies first quarter freshmen and also, individually, the traditional developmental studies reading classes. Thus, we believe we are in a position to assess the comparative success of the B/P approach.

We are well aware of the controversy surrounding the *FAC* approach. In an unpublished paper, "Beyond Bartholomae and Petrosky: Will It Work For The Rest of Us," presented at the 1990 College Composition and Communication Conference in Chicago, J. Fogarty and S. Robins made the following assertion:

> *This course represents a radical departure from the traditional approaches to remedial reading and writing and has generated a great deal of discussion among those of us who teach composition. Increasingly, there seems to be agreement with the course's theory and method but serious reservations about the practicality of implementing the course . . .*

These "serious reservations" we wish to confront. Questions we will address include the following:

1. How do underprepared beginning freshmen who spend a quarter writing responses and essays based on the reading of full-length books rank on standardized exit reading and writing exams? How do these students compare with students in traditional skills-based courses on the exit exams? What differences are there in the percentage of exit rates?

2. Are there significant differences between test scores for students cross-matched by sex, race, and placement scores in the traditional and experimental classes?

3. Are there observable differences in students' writing on pre- and post-writing tests between students in traditional and experimental courses?

4. How do these underprepared freshmen feel about this combined reading/writing course that is much more academically demanding than the traditional skills-based developmental courses their peers are taking?

Students in the *FAC* modified courses read three full length books, Anne Tyler's *A Slipping Down Life*, Maya Angelou's *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*, Judith Guest's *Ordinary People*, and the chapters on adolescence in Gail Sheehy's *Passages*. For each of these books, students write a reading response and take an objective test. They also write 10 formal essays based on the theme of growth and change in adolescence; some of these essays are based on their readings and some on their own personal experiences. At midterm, each student contributes an essay about the significant incidents in his or her high school years. These chapters are then printed, and the book becomes an assigned text for students to read and respond to as case studies on adolescence. For a final writing assignment, students formulate and develop an opinion about growth and change in adolescence based on their readings of all the texts.

Wheeling Park High School's Comprehensive Graduation Enhancement Program

Leo Boissy

In 1979 George Krelis, then Ohio County School's director of student services, and John Nanny, attendance director, wrote a grant to help reduce the county drop-out rate. It was their hope that this program would ensure that each student contemplating withdrawing from school would receive an exit interview. Since the first year of the program, the county dropout efforts have grown into a complex multifaceted program with efforts to serve each and every student in the county school system. This presentation will focus exclusively on those services delivered at the county consolidated high school. The development of programs will be traced from their creation to the present time detailing changes made to ensure their success.

The home-school visitor is the heart of the school's dropout prevention efforts. It is this person's responsibility to coordinate the school dropout efforts and administer to the needs of the at-risk students. The home-school visitor is first and foremost a student advocate. This person must ensure that students do not fall victim to being pushed out of school by staff, peers, or administration. The home-school visitor serves the student population by providing an open-door safe, environment where students can freely express their feelings and voice their concerns without fears of reprisal. This is done by individual counseling sessions, group counseling sessions, and home visits. The home-school visitor also intervenes on behalf of students by conferring with faculty and administrative staff. Students are made aware of their rights and due process thus guaranteeing fairness to all students. The home-school visitor also lends much support to students experiencing out-of-school problems which make it difficult to continue attending school successfully.

The present attendance policy requiring that students make up unexcused absences by attending Saturday school was created in 1981. This program is not presented as a punishment for the day missed. Instead, students are told that they have an obligation to attend a number of days in order to receive credit. This minimum time needs to be completed either by attending school during regular school hours or Saturday school. Students are required to make up an unexcused absence and complete assigned class work while supervised by certified teachers and administrators. This practice has greatly helped reduce the number of absentees and the number of dropouts. Students who regularly attend school experience much less trouble keeping up with their academic work; therefore, student and teacher frustration is minimized. Since students generally do not enjoy attending Saturday school, many students attend school more regularly.

In 1983 Wheeling Park High School concentrated its efforts to help drop outs who wished to return to school. In the past, these students experienced a very low success rate, often dropping out again within the first two months of their return. Wheeling Park High School developed a concentrated program to help these high-risk students. The re-entry workshop is a week long workshop required of all students wishing to return to school. The program is comprised of five, 2-1/2 hour sessions presented a week prior to the beginning of each semester. These sessions are first and foremost a vehicle to convey the message that the school cares very much about the student's success at school. This message is conveyed by a caring attitude on the part of the group facilitator and the school administration. The returning students are told that their return is considered a new beginning and past transgressions are wiped clean. Students are told that the staff is prepared to help them work toward success. The workshop's second goal is to begin building a peer support group among the returning students. Much time is spent allowing students to begin bonding. Usually after the five-day workshop, these students show signs of forming friendships which greatly help them when they begin attending school. The third goal is teaching students sound decision-making practices by examining their values and goals. Students are told that this workshop is the appropriate time and place to decide if returning to school is truly what the student desires. Usually one third of the returning hopefuls choose to withdraw their request to return before the end of the workshop. The final workshop goal is the introduction of four self-defeating behaviors: procrastination, worry, social anxiety, and non-assertiveness. Students are taught to identify these behaviors in their lives and given strategies to help change these behaviors.

Once students have successfully completed the re-entry workshop, they are enrolled on a half-day schedule with the re-entry study skills class first period of the day. A halfday schedule allows the student a semester to reorient themselves to academics. Realizing these students did not live in a vacuum while not attending school, we discovered that students are more successful at resuming their academic pursuits when given an opportunity to reprioritize their lives gradually. The first period study skills class is a continuation of the re-entry workshop. Students benefit from meeting with a student advocate at the beginning of each school day. This class allows the students to voice any concern they wish; it also continues to foster the caring environment which is necessary to ensure success. The last class component is a weekly monitoring system which helps both staff and student receive feedback from their teachers. Each week students carry a progress report check sheet to each class. Teachers record information about the student's academic progress, conduct, absenteeism, and current grade. This information allows students to receive positive reinforcement quickly for good work and also provides an opportunity to help students who are experiencing difficulties. The class has a nine-topic curriculum which helps students become more prepared for school. Subjects covered are: stress reduction strategies, improving listening skills, assertiveness training, and studying behaviors common to successful people.

The latest effort to help identify at-risk students is the care-call program initiated in 1988. Each absent student from K-12 is called at home if not reported absent by a parent. This care-call gives the school an opportunity to voice its concern to parents about their child's absence. This program helps parents become immediately aware of their child's absence and gives them the opportunity to remedy the situation or ask for help if needed. These calls have helped the school identify at risk students before insurmountable academic damage occurs. Parents respond favorably to this practice. Many students attend school simply because they know their parents will know about their absence before noon.

No single program can solve all problems for all students. Schools must accept the need to implement multi-faceted programs to help meet the needs of all students. Even the smallest schools are attended by students with different socioeconomic lifestyles, cultural differences, and various values. Schools must implement these much needed programs if they wish to meet the needs of all students. Ohio County Schools is far from believing that all the solutions have been found. Because of this, program changes and additions are continuous to meet the needs that are forever being discovered.

Verbal Intervention With African-American Students

Marie Ann Polite

School-based personnel often express frustration with the results of their efforts to deal effectively with the negative verbal behavior and/or negative "attitude" of some African-American students. The verbal confrontations (often brought on by negative "attitudes") are sometimes the beginning of incidents which lead to disciplinary action (e.g. suspension, expulsion, corporal punishment, etc.) being taken against these students. The use of appropriate intervention techniques and increased awareness of cultural differences could help school personnel avoid or reduce the number of such confrontations.

One might wonder, "isn't it safe to assume that except for group social and economic differences, the African-American and Caucasian child are the same? Can the differences that exist be removed by subjecting these children to the same treatment contingencies?" Is the African-American child a Caucasian child who "happens" to be painted black? A careful examination of scientific, historical and socio-psychological evidence points to negative answers to these questions.

There are critical differences between African-American and Caucasian children. Research has confirmed the following points.

Scientific/Social

(1) Detrimental prenatal influences are proportionately greater for the African-American child as well as prematurity, infant mortality, and maternal mortality rates. These factors often have negative effects on their mental, behavioral and educational development.

(2) Regardless of class or economic background, the African-American child's physical development differs significantly in advance of that of the Caucasian child's.

(3) Around the age of three, the African-American child becomes aware of ethnicity and this awareness begins to have a definite effect on many areas of his personality including his self-identity, self-esteem, self-confidence, assertiveness, and attitude toward his own and other ethnic groups.

(4) Child-rearing practices in African-American homes often stress development of independence, survival skills and, assertive and or aggressive attitudes in the children. School cultures often require behavior which oppose this kind of thinking and thus, results in these children being labeled negatively.

Historical/Psychosocial

The psychosocial environment into which the African-American child is born is confusing and complex. Their overall reigning psychosocial environment is grounded in the history and experience of slavery and subsequent racial discrimination This child is socialized by persons of this historical-experiential background. In addition, some are exposed to street scenes, lifestyles, family forms, rules of conduct, ethical codes, and economic practices which are alien to Caucasian and African-Americans of middle class status. This may make it difficult for some African-American children to synthesize a code of behavior, appropriateness of emotional expression and organization of thought that is functional in or out of his surroundings.

Behavioral

Prosocial, unsocial or antisocial behaviors are not innate. The student develops his/her characteristic social behavior as a result of learning, especially as a result of early childhood learning experiences. The effects of these experiences on the personality of the student coupled with interactions of the child with his parents, peers, teachers and significant others usually help determine if his/her attitudes/behavior will be prosocial or antisocial.

Unsocial or antisocial attitudes and tendencies mark the behavior of persons who as children have been deprived of opportunities for favorable social interaction due to prejudice, unfavorable socioeconomic circumstances or restrictive practices of a religious, political, or social nature. These same attitudes and tendencies may develop as a result of too much social interaction with a highly unstable and disorderly social environment. What behavior is considered social or antisocial depends on the particular group norms which are used as a standard. What is socially acceptable in one environment may be considered socially unacceptable in another. The characteristic behavior of a person which may be considered as adaptive in one group/culture may be considered maladaptive in another group/culture. A chief cause of African-American and Caucasian conflict in America is the differing attitudes of these two subcultures as to what behavior should be considered social or anti-social.

The differences between the development and socialization of African-American and Caucasian children are real. Since schools are a cultural product, reflect culture, and are established to maintain and advance that culture, one would expect those with congruent beliefs of that culture to succeed in its school. The skills and habits necessary for success in school, such as punctuality, orderliness, obedience to authority, cooperation, responsibility, non-aggressiveness, delay of gratification, and verbal facility may already be a part of a child's life if he is from a middle-class family. For some African-American children who were socialized in a different culture, school can represent an unnecessary, abnormal, oppressive or disconnecting experience because it requires such skills.

Preventive Techniques

In addition to remembering that positive verbal behavior is required to prevent verbal confrontations, one should be aware that almost 90 percent of all communication is nonverbal in nature.

Each individual has his/her own personal space, and any intrusion into that space increases anxiety and could be perceived as a threat. "Getting in my face" and "putting his hand in my face" are often the reported causes of confrontations. These acts create tension and indicate that a challenge has been issued in the African-American culture.

Body posture and movement often indicate how one feels about a person or situation. Ignoring a student's behavior and/or assuming a particular authoritative or challenging-type body stance may result in confrontation.

It is also essential to be aware of not only what we say but how we say it when speaking to others. Only a small percentage of the message we deliver to another person is delivered through words themselves. It is important to keep the tone, volume and cadence of one's voice in check.

Suggestions include:

(1) Avoid inflections of impatience, condescension, etc.
(2) Keep the volume appropriate for the distance and situation.
(3) Deliver the message at an even cadence or rhythm.

African-American students often report that they "back talked" or were "disrespectful" to adults because of how a message was delivered to them. Others report that the adult or peer offended them because of the way the other "looked" at the African-American student. "Cutting eyes" are a challenge also.

Use of particular words and phrases in a condescending manner can provoke anger or promote resentment in some African-American students (e.g. boy, gal, your mama, etc.). Knowing the history of the use of such words can prove helpful in preventing verbal confrontations.

Another general tip is to be observant. Verbally aggressive behavior can often be detected ahead of time. Be aware of changes in student behavior and/or personal circumstances.

Types of Behaviors/Effects

Verbal intervention should be used whenever possible to address negative verbal comments and avoid verbal confrontations. The types of behaviors commonly exhibited by some African-American students, as reported by students, teachers, and administrators, include questioning, refusal, explosion, and intimidation. Examples of these behaviors are listed here (see p. 168):

* 1. Questioning: Questions teacher's/adult's authority, argues with irrelevant questions, asks "Why" in belittling manner
* 2. Refusal: will not listen, follow directions, is disrespectful, ignores requests
* 3. Explosion: uses profanity, becomes verbally abusive, yells
* 4. Intimidation: threatens others continually, degrades/humiliates others

* Any of these behaviors may be accompanied by a pointed look, a sigh, a sneer, a look of clear disdain, or the use of profanity.

The effects of these behaviors can be far-reaching. These behaviors tend to create fear in others, provoke others to anger, waste instructional time, create or promote further conflict in the environment, and destroy student-student and student-teacher/adult relationships.

Precipitating Factors/Interventions

Some precipitating factors, or external or internal causes, of negative verbal behavior by students are outlined here. Primary causes of such behavior often are: need for attention, power, or revenge, lack of self-confidence or self-esteem, fear, or failure. Other causes could be physiological or psychological in nature.

Approaches which have proven successful with these students are suggested here for the types of behavior identified previously.

Questioning: Give rational responses, stay on topic, set limits if behavior persists
Refusal: Set reasonable limits, follow through, allow student an "out"
Explosion: Allow explosion, remove others from area, issue reasonable directives/limits
Intimidation: Remove from area, conference with him/her privately, get help if necessary

In all circumstances, the following should be a part of the intervention plan:

(1) private conference, to discuss why's, future plans, cool down.
(2) be respectful, professional, detached.
(3) remind student of choices made and consequences of decisions.
(4) keep cool and calm, don't react personally.
(5) don't threaten, set reasonable limits, follow through.
(6) be specific about what behavior disturbs you.
(7) praise appropriate behavior.
(8) keep your sense of humor.
(9) don't fight fire with fire.
(10) seek help or advice from others.

Conclusion

Knowing the cultural norms, personal circumstances and background of one's students helps the adult (teacher/administrator) understand the students' behaviors and the causes of those behaviors, and select appropriate techniques to handle the same. If the adult also realizes that some African-American children have been socialized for survival, independence, and assertiveness, he/she will adjust his/her expectations and responses to reflect this knowledge.

Howard School: An Alternative Opportunity for Success

Judith K. Ingle

In 1988, Mr. Cliff Dodson, superintendent of the Georgetown County School District in Georgetown, South Carolina, made a bold proposal to the Board of Trustees. He proposed that an alternative school be implemented in an attempt to stem the tide of increasing numbers of dropouts in the school district. The Board of Trustees took the risk that, as Mr. Dodson put it, "this project could be a complete failure, but saving one child is worth the risk."

Then in January 1990 the district received a grant from the state of South Carolina to implement a district-wide dropout prevention program which was comprised of many components including continuation of the alternative school This grant was part of a statewide effort to continue the efforts at innovation begun by the Education Improvement Act, passed in 1984. This particular legislation, called Target 2000, was designed, in part, to funnel money into districts which had developed proposals, many of which focused on at-risk children and dropout prevention. The grant which Georgetown School District received totaled over $900,000 for a three-year project.

In March of 1990 a coordinator of the grant was hired; this person also served as director of the alternative school, which is called

Howard School. Howard is located in a former high school which, five years ago, merged with another high school in a new facility. The school occupies the downstairs portion of this facility as well as one science lab upstairs.

Howard School is there to serve students who have had difficulty in the other schools in the district. The primary characteristic of these students is that they are average for their grade placement. They have been retained one or more times in elementary and/or middle school. They have experienced many years of failure and negative consequences. They have struggled academically; they have poor attendance and discipline records. They have little self-confidence and little self-esteem. They are not good decision-makers, and, most of the time, they act and speak before they think. For the most part, these students are perfectly capable of learning; in fact, it is requested that only students who have the ability to be successful be recommended to Howard. The primary objective is that these students graduate from high school someday, so we want students who can be successful but who, for whatever reasons, have chosen not be to successful.

Howard accepts students who are in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth grades. This year we have one fifth-grader who was placed in the seventh grade because she was 13 years old. Any sixth-graders whom we accept are also placed in the seventh grade. At the end of the tenth grade, students are returned to their home high schools. It is important for us to remember that even though a student may be classified as a seventh-grader, he or she is typically at least two years behind.

The selection process begins every spring with recommendations from guidance counselors and principals from the middle and high schools in the district. We accept students only at the beginning of the school year, so it is important that we select students carefully the previous spring. The guidance counselor and/or the principal from each school beings the recommendations to a selection committee comprised of the assistant superintendent for Instruction, the assistant superintendent for administration, the director of special services, and the coordinator of the dropout prevention program/director of Howard School. The recommendations are discussed by this committee after which the director of Howard visits each school to interview the students and their parents/guardians.

This commitment from both the student and the parents is very important. We understand that this is a big step for these students because in many cases they will be traveling 20-25 miles from their homes and their home schools to attend Howard. They will experience some homesickness for their schools, and they will go through a certain period of unhappiness at being removed from a familiar setting. We expect that some students and parents will change their minds over the summer, but we want to minimize this as much as possible.

After the interviews, the final selections are made. There are many factors which influence our decisions. We do not accept the most severe discipline problems in the district. We do not want to foster the reputation that Howard is a dumping ground or a school only dumb or bad students attend. We look at students' attendance records, discipline records, grade reports, test scores, and anecdotal information. We look for students who are capable and who have the best possible chance of graduating from high school. For a student in South Carolina to receive a high school diploma, he/she must obtain 20 Carnegie Units and pass all three sections (reading, writing, and math) of the exit exam.

Students who have been accepted into Howard are informed as soon as possible after the school year ends. We cannot determine how many students we will accept or in which grade levels we can accept them until we know how many of our students are returning or have been promoted.

Students come to us from all over the

district, so we have to arrange transportation. We transport students in vans or minibuses with drivers who live in these areas and who work at the school during the day as custodians and aides. This is another factor about which students complain. Those who live far away have to get up and leave much earlier than if they were attending their home school. Our day begins at 8:05 and ends at 2:53.

The curriculum at Howard emphasizes the cognitive, the affective, and the vocational development of each student. The cognitive aspect of the curriculum includes the basic subjects: English, math, social studies (world geography, S.C. history), science (life science, earth science, physical science, and biology), and physical education. The teachers teach six periods out of an eight-period day including lunch. We have five teachers, one of each subject, so each teacher teaches all grade levels.

A mainstay of our English/language arts and math program is computer-assisted instruction. We are using an integrated learning system called WICAT in addition to teacher-directed instruction. Students spend 20 minutes of each English/language arts and math class in the computer lab and the rest of the period in class. The WICAT curriculum allows us to focus on basic skills instruction via the computer which frees the classroom teacher to focus on activities which might be more challenging and less on drill and practice. WICAT is not simply a drill and practice approach, however. Students are challenged to think and expand what they already know. In the reading portions of the program, students must explain and defend their responses and their answers. Students also have access to word processing which encourages them to write more frequently and more fluidly.

Teachers at Howard are encouraged to rely less on textbooks and more on interactive activities which involve students. Of course, there is a certain amount of teacher-directed information which must be given in any unit of study, but, for the most part, teachers work very hard to provide a variety of activities in class period and throughout a unit. Typically these students see very little purpose of school or education in general, so we strive constantly toward making learning relevant to their lives. At Howard, we recognize that an angry, hostile, depressed, troubled child is not ready to learn. We spend an inordinate amount of time working with the students to break through the hostility and the misbehavior so that learning can take place.

Our commitment to affective education focuses on increasing self-esteem, self-confidence, self-control, and self-understanding. This is a massive undertaking! Many hours are spent helping students learn how to interact appropriately with their peers and with adults. Our students typically demonstrate practically no self-discipline and react rather than respond to most situations. They take exception to almost anything that anyone says to them. They are very physical, always touching, pushing, shoving, bothering others. Most of this physical behavior is not meant to be aggressive, but it often leads to and produces conflict. The verbal abuse they heap on each other is constant and relentless. We could spend reams of paper and hours discussing why the students behave the way they do, but we try very hard to focus on the behavior without trying to become overly involved in why they behave the way they do.

All seventh and eighth-graders attend a counseling class every day for about 30 minutes. I had great expectations that this part of our curriculum would really make a difference with these students and that we would be able to change some behavior with our new and youngest students. My dreams fell apart when the guidance counselor was called up with his National Guard Unit to go to Saudi Arabia. We had to rethink our plans. The social studies teacher, who was also to have a counseling class, had to take a larger group while the rest of them went to the computer lab. We rotate the students every 4-1/2 weeks from counseling to the computer lab. This is not ideal by any means (the social studies teacher agrees!), but we had no other choice.

We are very aware of how much positive reinforcement these students need. Many, if not most, of them have never had any type of positive recognition at school; or course, this transfers to home where their low self-image is reinforced because they are not being successful in school. We have initiated several programs to recognize and reward students.

We choose a student of the week whom we recognize on the large bulletin board by the office. The students who are chosen fill out some interest sheets (made on Print Shop) such as "My Favorite Food," "My Favorite Singer/Group," My Favorite Place," etc. We create a bulletin board with the student's name surrounded by these sheets which the students not only fill out but also color! It really makes a colorful, bright display.

We also recognize students for perfect attendance. Students who do not miss a single day in a nine-week period are rewarded. At the end of the first nine weeks, we brought pizza, Coke, and cookies in for them to have at lunch. At the end of the second nine weeks, we took the group out to lunch at a local restaurant that features an all-you-can eat hot bar. Some of them really outdid themselves!

The social studies teacher is in charge of putting up a birthday bulletin board each month. At the end of each month, we have a birthday cake for those who had birthdays that month. We also give them a card and a pencil.

We also recognize students by selecting them to speak to various groups in the district and to participate in special activities at other schools. Our students can compete in district wide competitions such as the spelling bee and the Lieutenant Governor's Writing Competition.

We work very hard to communicate good news to parents. Last summer before school started we sent invitations made on Print Shop to each student inviting him/her to attend Howard. We also send letters congratulating students on being on the honor roll or participating in some special activity. Students tell me that these letters are the first positive or congratulatory ones they have ever received from any school! Parents frame them and show them off to family members and neighbors.

We are constantly searching for ways to make school a more inviting place for both students and staff. We can physically see the changes in the students' facial expressions and body language after being here for a while, especially if they have given us lots of opportunities to praise them.

The vocational component of our program is achieved through a great deal of cooperation from our career center. They have bent over backwards to make it possible for our students to enter courses and to receive training before students normally would be allowed to do so. They allow our students to begin cooperative education before other students. All seventh and eighth-graders attend the career center for one hour every day to go through prevocational classes. This gives them about two weeks in each course the career center offers so that when they have to choose which course they will take as ninth-graders, they can make an informed choice. The ninth-graders attend the career center for two hours every morning for level I classes which include welding, masonry, sewing, food services, auto body, and auto mechanics. The tenth-graders attend for three hours every afternoon for the second level of the course they took as ninth-graders. At the end of these two levels, the student is certified as a master welder, an auto mechanic, or as a competent worker in whatever field in which she/he has received training.

One of the advantages that our ninth and tenth-graders have is that, because of special waivers granted to us by the State Department of Education, students may earn up to but not more than nine credits in a school year. All of our high school students are earning seven credits this year and will have the opportunity to attend a special summer school to earn two more. This means that a student who attends Howard in both the ninth and tenth grades will have 14 of the 20 credits he/she needs to graduate. Most students, with little effort, will be able to graduate by going one additional summer and one academic year, providing they can pass the exit exam. This is powerful incentive for a student who is 17 and still in the ninth grade! We push and prod to help them see the possibilities.

The School District of Georgetown County has many more students who need to be served than can be served by the alternative school. We presently have 75 students enrolled. We began the year with 84, but some have been expelled, some have become pregnant and left school (even though they didn't have to), and some are being served by other state agencies. We have had some 17-year-old students walk away feeling they had put in their time and were tired of school. Our experience has been that these students don't enter adult education programs, at least not right away. I have my doubts about whether they ever will.

We began the year with a vision — that none of our students at Howard would drop out. While it was not a realistic vision, it made us work very hard to keep our students in school. What I have grown to realize is that the problem is complex as are our students' lives. There are many, many more factors which influence a student's decision to drop out of school than just whether education is important to his/her future. The problem is a social, cultural, economic problem which cannot be solved by the educational system alone.

We must begin as early as possible to reach students and parents. By the time students are 16 and 17 years old problems are far greater and more difficult to solve. Not that the parents do not care; they either don't know how to deal with the problems (either their own or their child's), or they are frustrated to the point of giving up. We are not doing enough to help these parents even at the elementary levels. Programs at PTA meetings are not enough. The parents of our students are very supportive, but, in most cases, absolutely ineffective in changing their child's behavior. If they had been effective, the child would not be attending Howard School.

The success of the program at Howard will not be determined for several years. Some days are nightmares; others are actually good! On a day-to-day basis, we see the progress. We measure the progress in small increments and praise God for every little bit we see. Of course, there is a certain amount of backsliding. There are no miracles and no quick fixes or cures. We strive every day to make Howard School a place where students want to come and where students can realize their dreams and their goals.

Youth At Risk and School Discipline
Working With and Not Against Your Students in Need

Gregg Weinlein

Last evening, Ray was kicked out of his home by his father. He cannot go to his mother's place because she threw him out the month before. Ray is tardy to school the next morning, has a verbal confrontation with his teacher, throws his books across the room, and is sent to the principal's office. Ray is an at-risk youth. Is he at-risk because he is a discipline problem at school? Or does his discipline problem stem from his being at-risk? Does Ray's behavior warrant a suspension from school? Is suspending the student from school for a period of time the best way to meet his educational and social needs — to address the issues of Ray being homeless? Students must be responsible for their behavior, even students at-risk, but is an out-of-school suspension the only disciplinary recourse for an educational delivery system? Are there alternatives?

School systems today are complex, bureaucratic human service agencies that serve a wide variety of needs for an ever changing client population. Gone are the days, and even the image, of the one-room school house, this image having been replaced by labyrinthian organizational structures called public schools. School districts remain hierarchies despite the movements to flatten the organizational structure through participatory management techniques, a movement which currently has run into its most devastating roadblock: the economy. In the multi-layer, hierarchical maze of school system management, the individual needs of special groups of students are often lost. These small populations who are given the least attention consist of the very students who probably need the most attention from the professional and support staff employed by school districts. Today, the at-risk student population would fall into this category.

Often, at-risk students literally fall through the cracks of a school's disciplinary procedures. This shortsightedness occurs because schools ignore a key concept when dealing with such students: *school discipline problems are primarily the result of and not the cause of a student being at risk.* Ray's outburst in his homeroom was not because he dislikes his attendance room teacher, nor was it because of his disapproval of the school's policy on tardiness. Ray exploded because at the moment of confrontation he was a homeless high school student whose entire spectrum of emotions were controlled by fear and rage. Although his behavior was inappropriate, nevertheless, he was pushing for a way to bring attention to his predicament.

Unfortunately, the disciplinary processes utilized by school districts tend to be more antiquated than their organizational structures. Schools today, because of their continued bureaucratic nature, operate at a distance from their client population. When a student is disciplined, the punishment is often routine, impersonal, and coldly systematic. For this you have detention. For that you are suspended. The demand for codes of conduct, although well intentioned, only add to the already large mass of bureaucratic policies which exist within our schools.

Schools must not lose touch with their at-risk youth. Administrators and teachers should design and implement programs which do not allow at-risk youth to fall through the cracks of a school's discipline process. These programs should be humanistic in nature in that they service the needs of students and simultaneously make students responsible for their behavior. The programs should both punish and assist. Included here are outlines of three programs for replication — programs which recognize that school discipline problems are primarily the result of and not the cause of a student being at risk.

BEGINNINGS

Beginnings is an attendance room program for students at risk. At-risk students are assigned a special, extended homeroom whose teacher is in direct and immediate contact with a parent/guardian, building advocate, principal, counselor, and, when pertinent, a student's probation officer concerning a student's tardiness or absence. This special attendance room will be operated in an atmosphere of concern, responsibility, and accountability. An objective of the Beginnings program is to enlarge the number of adults in the school setting whom the at-risk student perceives as genuinely concerned about his/her well being.

TABS

TABS is an acronym for Teachers As Big Brothers/Sisters. The goal of this program is to have each at-risk student assigned to a faculty member who will serve in the capacity of a big brother/sister. This faculty member will serve as an advocate for the at-risk student and will participate in monthly team meetings with the principal, parent/guardian, the guidance counselor, and other teacher and support staff involved in the student's life.

SPECTRUM

Spectrum is an alternative program for suspended students which would remove students from their regular class program as a punishment for rule violations and assign them to an in-school alternative program. The underlying philosophy being that a student's needs are better served in school then by a suspension out of school. The program serves as a humanistic disciplinary program which allows schools to continue with its most important goal — that of providing appropriate educational services for all students. Spectrum will be staffed by a certified teacher and will include the opportunity for counseling. The Spectrum teacher will also participate in the monthly team meetings for at-risk students.

TOR

TOR is an acronym for "The Other Road" and is a formal alternative education program to meet the special needs of all at-risk students who have not found success in the mainstream program. The program consists of an individualized education plan which will lead to a school diploma. The emphasis of the TOR program will be threefold: academics, counseling, and work-study. Within the academic component of the TOR program will be courses on life skills, communications, relationships, coping strategies, and self-esteem.

Development and Implementation of a Computer-Based Teaching System for Secondary School Mathematics

Ted L. Hammock

Project Summary

The National Science Center Foundation (NSCF) in Augusta, Georgia, is a non-profit organization whose goal is to improve performance of U.S. students in mathematics and science by creating new technological tools for teaching those subjects and implementing those tools in our schools.

The NSCF's initial objective is to develop a computer-based teaching system to improve the teaching and learning of secondary school mathematics from Algebra I through calculus.

Design of a unique teaching system called Learning Logic (L^2) began in October 1988, functional specifications were finalized in June 1989, and basic L^2 operating software and initial Algebra I courseware was completed and alpha tested in June of 1990.

NSCF is beta testing Algebra I in seven Georgia high schools during the 1990-91 school year.

Project Description

Introduction

The National Science Center Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit institution whose specific purpose is to help restore U.S. world leadership in creating and applying new technology. The NCSF is pursuing three mission-oriented goals: (1) to renew and increase interest in mathematics and the hard sciences; (2) to develop new methods for teaching those disciplines that utilize computers and other technologies; (3) to transfer those new methods to U.S. schools.

The NSCF is committed to achieving these goals rapidly. The decreasing performance by our students and the declining number of qualified teachers in mathematics and science make it imperative that our nation implement effective solutions quickly.

The NSCF is developing a unique, easily used, computer-based instruction system to revitalize teaching and learning performance in mathematics and the hard sciences. The NSCF also is developing computer courseware that encompasses the secondary school mathematics curriculum, from Algebra I through calculus.

Secondary school mathematics was chosen for L^2's initial utilization since that segment of education is the transition to quantitative thinking, and thus is the "rite of passage" to higher studies in mathematics and the hard sciences and all careers in engineering, science, and other technical areas. The failure of American students to master algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and calculus is a major "choke" point in the U.S. educational pipeline.

Only 6.4 percent of U.S. 17-year-olds can work multiple step algebra problems, the lowest of the seven major industrialized countries.

About 37 percent of U.S. college freshmen take remedial mathematics.

U.S. citizens earn less than 50 percent of the doctoral degrees in engineering and only 60 percent of doctorates in the hard sciences, including mathematics, awarded by U.S. universities each year .

Improved preparation is essential if our students are to have the option of entering technical specialities, either directly from high school into the work force or after continuing their formal education.

Learning Logic

L^2 is targeted specifically at increasing the performance of average students. However, L^2 's self-paced environment also benefits superior students by enabling them to advance faster,. and below-average students by allowing them to advance as slowly as necessary for comprehension. Thus, the rate of progress is not determined by the traditional classroom environment.

L^2 is the prime delivery system for course material but does not replace teachers. They manage L^2 as it performs traditional classroom tasks and numeric and symbolic computations, giving the teacher more time to instruct individual students. Learning Logic allows teachers to monitor, at their computer workstations, the progress of each student and immediately detect when L^2 alone cannot get a student past a point of difficulty.

L^2 presents course information in small increments and tests students frequently. Chapters are divided into sections which are broken into topics. Topics are made up of presentations composed of pages. A page is essentially one computer screen of material.

L^2 maintains detailed profiles on each student which specify his or her proficiency in each mathematical principle of a course. L^2 analyzes the profile to determine which topic to present next.

Based on each student's responses, L^2 courseware chooses from multiple paths through a course to provide different presentations of topics. High-level presentations display essential points of a topic and move quickly to a problem se[illegible]ower-level presentations offer progressively more explanatory material and move gradually to difficult points. Every student must satisfy the criteria for topic mastery, regardless of which presentation is received.

L^2 uses high-resolution color graphics to maximize transfer of information and to stimulate student interest. As an example, the system can display a quadratic equation at the bottom of the screen and plot a graph of the equation at the top of the screen. If a student changes coefficients of the equation, the resulting change is immediately shown in the graph. Equations are displayed on the monitor screen in recognizable mathematical notation and not as "computer jargon."

Students using the L^2 system work at the computer instead of performing calculations on paper and transferring answers. Each student and teacher workstation has a built-in calculator.

Prior computer experience is not required to use L^2. Before first using the system, students are tested to determine beginning level of knowledge which facilitates transfer into a L^2 class and allows students to start class where their current knowledge ends. Nothing is missed due to class absences. On returning, a student picks up at the point where he or she last stopped.

The L^2 system tests students frequently so that gaps in their knowledge of specific principles are detected and corrected before advancing to more complex principles. Since solving a mathematics problem generally requires prior knowledge of certain principles, L^2's database associates each problem with the principles required. When a student makes an error in working a problem, L^2 reviews the principles involved to refresh the student's knowledge.

L^2 is a mastery-based system founded upon the concept that learning mathematics is a building block process in which all prerequisite principles must be mastered before a new principle is presented to students.

L^2 is user-friendly. It teaches students to be comfortable with computers, improves reading skills, fosters acceptance and understanding of technology, and improves the thinking process.

The L^2 system can run courseware in many disciplines at many levels. Following completion of secondary school mathematics, the NSCF will develop secondary school science courseware.

Other potential applications—vocational-technical training, self-tutorial refresher system for professionals, delivery system for employee training programs in industry, military utilization for specialized training—also are emerging and will be explored.

Significant progress has been made in development of Learning Logic. A major milestone was the placement of L^2 in seven schools in the Augusta, Georgia, area. Schools within a 50-mile radius of NSCF headquarters were selected to ease communication and coordination problems associated with initial testing of the product.

A beta test of Learning Logic software is underway in these seven high schools during the current school year. Enhancements will be made frequently and features will be added to the system during 1990-91 as they are developed. Limited testing of courseware will be performed. A definitive measure of student performance in the L^2 environment will not be made until software has been tested.

Teacher training is a crucial component of the NSCF's plan to implement Learning Logic. The training course is an intensive two-week class covering all aspects of classroom use of Learning Logic and in-depth review of subject matter content. The course has 60 contact hours and qualified participants will be eligible for graduate degree credit. Three teachers are trained for each classroom in schools new to the L^2 environment.

NSCF support of Learning Logic in the classroom is one of the features that makes L^2 distinctive and superior to other computer-based education systems. Each classroom has a modem and telephone connection, enabling teachers to communicate with the NSCF staff by electronic mail or by calling directly in emergency situations.

A Learning Logic Help Line for teachers has been established. The NSCF connects to each classroom computer each evening to monitor both progress and problems. As courseware or software problems are identified and solved, corrections are down loaded to all L^2 classrooms. The NSCF believes this heuristic mechanism will insure L^2's evolution to the premier computer-based education system not only in the 1990s, but for the 21st century.

Secondary school mathematics courseware and the L^2 system will be completed by the end of 1993.

Learning Logic is designed for the computing equipment and power destined to become the standard of the 1990s. Its operating software design mandates continual monitoring, enhancement, and updating. This ensures that L^2, like the equipment it uses, will remain state-of-the-art. Learning Logic is a powerful, essential teaching tool for the next decade and into the new century.

Multi-Level Interventions for an Alternative School

Matthew Lane and Dennis Jacobson

The Phoenix Center is an alternative school in the Marion County School System. It serves students in grades six through twelve. Students eligible for this program have been identified as disruptive, as evidenced by frequent conflicts in their regular school. Such conflicts would include frequent documented detentions, disciplinary referrals, suspensions, or offenses which warrant expulsion. Once enrolled at the Phoenix Center students must remain a minimum of 45 days.

The disciplinary program instituted at the Phoenix Center is the result of input from many individuals to respond to the problems that existed in the center prior to January 1990. The faculty was unsatisfied with the limited consequences that the students faced as a result of their inappropriate behavior. The students were not being served well. The classroom environment was generally disruptive, and there was a high rate of suspension.

A multi-level intervention plan was implemented at the Phoenix Center at the beginning of the second semester of the 1989-1990 school year in an effort to reduce the number of student suspensions, improve the classroom environment, and, in general, serve the students better.

The philosophy of the group working on the reform of the disciplinary plan for the Phoenix Center was to develop a program that was responsive to the behaviors of the students. This behavior-driven program was to be designed to keep the student in a normal school routine as much as possible and still address the dysfunctional behavior. The multi-level intervention approach was developed by blending strategies from several different sources. A description of the implementation of the restructured disciplinary plan follows.

Level one interventions were standardized by utilizing teacher workshops to improve classroom interventions. Emphasis was placed on the prevention of problematic behavior through adjustments in teacher behaviors in the areas of methodology and response. The faculty was made cognizant of specific interventions to use with the at-risk student population. These interventions included: ignoring, point systems, response cost, behavior contracts, time out, positive practice and over-correction, relaxation training, "teacher-pleasing" social skills, peer tutors, proximity control, antiseptic bounce, signal interference, and hurdle lessons [Alberto, P.A & Troutman, A.C. (1982). *Applied Behavior Analysis for Teachers*, Charles E. Merrill Co.; Cummins, K.K. (1988) *The Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions*, Hawthorne Educational Services; Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students (1987). *Dealing With Aggression in the Classroom*, State of Florida Department of Education]. Through the workshop, teachers were instructed to use one or more of these interventions before a student was referred to the next level of intervention.

Level two interventions also placed the emphasis on prevention. The first component of level two interventions was the scheduling of students into a peer counseling class. This class was designed to help students make better decisions for themselves and facilitate good decision-making in other students. The model for decision-making used in the peer counseling groups consisted of: 1. Find out the problem 2. Find out the choices 3. Think about the choices 4. Make a decision 5. Evaluate the decision. The second component of level two interventions is the B.A.M.A. (Behavior/Attitude Modification Area) program. The purpose of BAMA is to assist the dysfunctional student in modifying his/her attitude and behavior so that the student may resume a normal class schedule. The teacher who had a student that exhibited behaviors that did not allow the class to function properly made an attempt to solve those problematic behaviors in the classroom. When the problems could not be solved without spending undue class time, then the teacher wrote the disciplinary referral including the problematic behavior and the interventions that had not met with success. Once the student entered BAMA the facilitator followed the steps outlined in Reality Therapy [Glasser, William (1969) *Schools Without Failure*]. These steps culminated in the student generating a contract to change their dysfunctional behavior. The BAMA facilitator continues the process with the attitude expressed in step eight of Reality Therapy — Never give up!

Level three interventions were used with students who did not seem to be able to develop the cooperative social skills needed in the mainstream classroom. After all attempts were made to develop the appropriate classroom skills and the student had not made any progress, a child study team was formed. This team consisted of the student's teachers, the BAMA facilitator, the peer counseling facilitator, the administrative assistant, the school counselor, the school psychologist, and any other appropriate personnel for that individual. The team made use of the observations of all the individuals that came in contact with the student, reviewed the cumulative file, met with the parents/guardian, and made recommendations for action. The final component of the third level of intervention was the use of suspension by the school administrators. This final component was exercised only in extreme cases especially when the safety of the student body was at risk.

These multiple levels of intervention implemented at the Phoenix Center do appear to have had a positive impact. The number of student suspensions decreased from an average of 6.6 per week first semester to an average of 2.2 per week second semester. Considering student population (approximately 90 students each semester), the suspension rate (number of suspensions per student enrolled) dropped from 1.31 to .43 by the end of second semester.

This program implementation was not initially designed as a research project, so little care was taken to establish a functional relationship between the independent (intervention program) and dependent (suspension rate) variables. However, additional subjective data were collected which significantly substantiate the effectiveness of this intervention package.

First, one would not expect, as a function of time, for the suspension rate to decrease between first and second semester. In fact, one might more appropriately predict that as the year progresses and student referrals mount and tolerance levels lower, suspensions would increase if all other variables were held constant. Thus, the decrease in suspensions would not seem to be simply a function of time. Still, it is acknowledged that no return to baseline was implemented, and no control group was used.

Second, and more importantly, however, a survey was administered to the staff at the Phoenix Center to gather their impressions of the new program to help assess its effectiveness. Results of that survey indicated that 83 percent of the staff said they used the interventions covered during inservices, and 93 percent of those who used the interventions viewed them as effective in changing student behavior. 83 percent indicated a desire for additional inservice on interventions. Seventy-two percent of the staff indicated they had used BAMA, and 77 percent of those who used it viewed it as effective in changing student behavior. Overall, 78 percent of the staff viewed the multi-level intervention program as a better disciplinary program than the previous program, while 5 percent thought the previous program was better. Finally, 78 percent believed the current program needs further improvement.

All of these survey data seem to lend social validity to the effectiveness of this program. Even the fact that a majority of the staff see a need for further changes can be viewed positively. Any good program should be open to "fine-tuning."

A final note: The latitude and support provided by the administration is also recognized as a major factor in this program's success.

Pass: Dealing Successfully with High-Risk Students at the Middle School/Junior High Level

Roger A. Young

Twenty percent of the babies born each year will be tough to teach. That means about one in five students in your building will be at-risk for dropping out (Hodgkinson, 1988).

The American Council on Education reports many school districts have developed excellent dropout prevention programs. But in terms of successful programs, the Parallel Advocate Support System Program (PASS) in Fort Collins, Colorado, looks pretty good.

According to curriculum designer Pam Sysum, PASS is unique because it is a cognitive-based approach with curriculum geared to serve the needs of high-risk students. How? By a concentrated effort on behalf of the school and variety of community resources.

A team of regular teachers, the principal, and the PASS teacher identify high-risk students who qualify for PASS. In addition to regular class time, they attend PASS class as an elective for 45 minutes, five days a week.

PASS operates under some concepts which characterize the program's basic philosophy:

1. The PASS Program serves students who because of attitude, attendance, personal or family problems, or a lack of academic skills are placed at risk for dropping out of school. (These children do not qualify as special education students under Public Law 94-142 of the Handicapped Children's Act.)

2. The home school setting provides the best opportunity for a learning experience.

3. The primary responsibility for academic achievement remains with the classroom teachers — while PASS Program teachers suggest ways for handling situations involving high-risk students.

4. We can more effectively meet high-risk students' individual needs with a variety of coordinated services, resources, and strategies — including positive adult and peer role models.

5. The PASS teacher's job description includes developing communication and close-working relationships with students' families and appropriate youth-serving agencies in the community.

Among other characteristics, youth at risk often have trouble dealing with traditional classrooms, exhibit behavioral problems and poor self-esteem, and become bored quickly by lack of variety in the classroom. PASS class teaches high-risk kids to cope with regular classes.

The PASS instructors also teach life skills and work as advocates for their students with other teachers, administration, parents, and community resources such as social services or the food distribution center.

When a student has trouble in a regular class, the PASS teacher helps by facilitating communication between the student, the regular teacher, and the principal.

Principals don't have to deal with situations involving problem students immediately. Unlike programs with volunteers, principals and other building staff can rely on the PASS teacher to have consistent, professional skills for handling difficult students first.

"Because we're often aware of potential problems before they happen," says PASS instructor Andy Chismar, "we try to intervene with help — a more proactive approach to helping kids solve problems."

In terms of teaching high-risk students to solve problems, curriculum designer Sysum uses the constructivist approach in combination with behavioral modification. As a PASS teacher/advocate she reinforces desirable behaviors when possible.

Positive reinforcers include encouraging words, points added to students' behavior charts, "goofy gifts," and special lunches out of the building with the PASS teacher. Handwritten communication to the family can be a powerful, positive reinforcer.

The reward system motivates students who lack intrinsic motivation. PASS teachers also use, concurrently, a self-rewarding system based on the cognitive strategy of "self-talk." The long-term goal is to assist the student in developing intrinsic motivation and to eventually remove artificial reinforcers.

The combined approach to shaping new behaviors assists students to transfer the cognitive skills learned in the classroom to other areas of life.

Because PASS teachers do home visits, they are familiar with high-risk students' family situations and that gives valuable insight to the regular staff. Knowing about students' families also helps the PASS teacher provide information and help with community resources.

One of Sysum's students had a problem at home. Public Service had shut off the electricity. Sysum contacted the appropriate resources to get the lights back on and the child could relax to concentrate on schoolwork.

Such individualized attention takes time, however. That is why an effective PASS class is limited to eight students—another unique feature. But attitude problems can arise with other teachers who may not appreciate the value of PASS teachers working with fewer kids.

As commonly found in other dropout prevention programs, the PASS teacher can develop a mentor relationship with students. But PASS staff are paid professionals who also work with other teachers and administrators by identifying at-risk students and heading off trouble before it gets to the office in the infamous action/reaction cycle.

Unlike using regular teachers (who already have full workloads), the program employs at least one PASS instructor per building to teach high-risk kids and to coordinate dropout prevention — which may include volunteers and other teachers.

PASS staff have to be a seasoned veterans who like working with tough cases—not just rookies or tenured instructors victimized by cutbacks.

Other staff will not take tips and advice on handling at-risk students from someone they don't respect. The program functions only to the degree and expertise of the teachers using its curriculum.

A consistent and professional level of communication needs to be maintained, so PASS teachers can work effectively with other instructors and administration.

Another unique characteristic: It is not a pull-out program like Self-Contained Special Education where difficult students are separated from the mainstream. Instead, PASS students get to see healthy role models for their age groups, too.

"If you remove at-risk students," says principal Phil Stewart, "they're not going to get good, positive peer models." He sees the program as essential to the overall school design.

So what's the payoff? Four years ago, we had 37 junior high dropouts. This year (1989-90) only two — and their grades were better too.

In terms of grade point average, PASS students' grades improved by about .2 of a grade. If, for example, a student started with a GPA of D+, he would bring that up to a C- by second semester.

We attributed the improved junior high dropout statistics to the PASS Program. About 50 percent of PASS students have demonstrated significantly improved attendance.

Two research projects (one in-house and the other by an independent party) attest to improved grades and attendance on behalf of PASS students (See Appendices I and II).

PASS teachers and building staff can expect effort on behalf of PASS kids. And that looks like improved attendance, goal setting, and following through to make it in school.

Sidebar #1

If you would like more information on the PASS Program, write: Roger Young, Dropout Prevention and Retrieval, Centennial Alternative High School, 330 E. Laurel Avenue, Fort Collins, Colorado 80524.

How the Parallel Advocate Support System (PASS) Compares to Successful Dropout Prevention Programs

Successful Programs		The PASS Program	
1.	Have small settings with low student-teacher ratios.	1.	Yes
2.	Have personalized attention to student needs.	2.	Yes
3.	Have materials and teaching formats stressing immediate, practical emphasis on basis academic skills.	3.	Yes
4.	Have consistent patterns of rewarding student achievement.	4.	Yes
5.	Demonstrate a way of keeping in touch with students after graduation.	5.	No
6.	Allow the school to serve the needs of older students who left school but wish to return for a diploma or GED.	6.	No
7.	Demonstrate flexibility for tailoring to different cultures and regions.	7.	No
8.	Incorporate the possibility for early intervention in elementary school.	8.	No
9.	Have the capacity to service and increasing English as a second language speaking population.	9.	Yes
10.	Usually cost money to implement.	10.	Yes

Sidebar #2

References:

Hodgkinson, Harold L. (1988, September). Facing the Future: Demographics and Statistics to Manage Today's Schools for Tomorrow's Children. *School Administrator*, pp. 25-31.

Appendix 1

Identifying At-Risk Students Early in Elementary School

Millions of American teenagers drop out of school each year. More than 600,000 young people dropped out of public schools in 1985-86. While the national average was 26 percent in 1987, some school districts face a dropout rate of over 40 percent (Hamby, 1989, and Dowdney, 1987).

Dropping out of school has far-reaching consequences not only for teenagers who discard career choices, but also for society as a whole. People without high school diplomas have a tough time obtaining job skills, and without job skills they must sometimes resort to living on minimum wages or perhaps even turn to crime in order to survive. There is indeed a problem for all of us when students drop out of school.

The first likely step in attacking the problem is identifying potential dropouts. Many of these at-risk or high-risk students display several similar and discernible characteristics (Mizell, 1986; Downey, 1987; Hamby, 1989; Depauw, 1987; O'Connor, 1985; and Hahn, Danzberger, and Lefkowitz, 1987).

Although all students are potential dropouts, there are two categories of circumstances that put students at risk: primary risk factors beyond the control of the student which may include race, family disposition, a handicapping condition, inappropriate education or an illness; and secondary risk factors existing because of student choice such as truancy, chronic disciplinary problems, teenage pregnancy, and school failure (Mizell, 1986).

We wanted to know at what point in a student's academic career we could first identify some of these characteristics, because we knew many decision-makers had limited data for these purposes (Mizell, 1986). We also knew the sooner a potential dropout is identified, the sooner we could attack the problem. Our research reinforces some of the findings related to both primary and secondary at-risk factors; and we are proposing a method of obtaining data for identifying at-risk students early in elementary school.

We developed and administered a survey to a group of junior high students in a high-risk program and the same survey to a random group of junior high students. Nineteen questions from the survey showed a high reliability factor in differentiating between at-risk and non at-risk students. On this basis a group of 32 at-risk students were identified and a group of 30 not at risk students were identified. We then followed their school cumulative (cum) records back through elementary school, searching for selected items of information.

Method

Subject

One hundred and twenty-six junior high students from the Poudre R-1 School District in Ft. Collins, Colorado, participated in the study. They were divided into two groups with 90 in the control group and 36 in the at-risk group. The at-risk students came from two junior high Parallel Advocate Support System (P.A.S.S.) programs. P.A.S.S. is a junior high program designed to aid students identified as being at risk for dropping out of school. The control group, from the same two junior high schools, was randomly selected from the school population.

Procedure

We administered a survey to the at-risk group and to the control group. It was originally designed as a test to determine if there was any improvement in a group of at-risk junior high students from the beginning to the end of a 16-week program. The questions were grouped under the headings: school adjustment, family strength, social isolation/alienation, deviant behavior, school records, and academic self concept. We tabulated the survey and charted the questions on a chi-square. There were 19 questions that showed a significant difference between the two groups. The 19 questions were then used to further refine the two groups and to identify 32 at-risk students and 30 students that were not at risk.

Using the school cum records, we then traced the two groups back through elementary school. We were searching for specific information and hoped to find differences between the two groups to be able to identify at-risk students early in their school career.

Results

In terms of attendance, there was little difference before second grade. Then the at-risk group's attendance averaged three to four days higher per year than that of the control group.

Achievement test results in second grade show the control group scoring higher than the at-risk group. The gap widens between the two groups as they progress through grade school.

The control group started first grade almost eight months sooner than the at-risk group.

Almost the same number in both groups were in Chapter 1 Reading in elementary school. The same ratio was reflected by the number of students who were in special education programs.

Twice as many of the at-risk group had repeated a grade in elementary school as had the control group. The at-risk students had twice as many transfers to other schools as did the control group.

Almost twice as many of the control group lived with both parents as did the at-risk group.

Significant health issues and whether or not they rode the bus did not seem to be significant factors.

Discussion

A broader sampling with larger numbers of participants would have been ideal. However, our small sample validates a number of factors which contribute to students becoming at-risk for dropping out of school.

Using attendance as a basis to identify at-risk students until late second or early third grade is difficult because of the lack of a significant difference between the two groups until then. As the two groups progressed through elementary school, the absences for the control group dropped off while the absences for the at-risk group increased. This tends to reinforce prior research indicating that poor attendance is one factor of an at-risk student.

Most of the control group attended elementary school in School District Poudre R-1 while more of the at-risk students came from out-of-district. This would indicate that a student who stays in one school district has a better chance of success for staying in school.

To start with, second grade achievement test results are consistently lower for the at-risk group. This remains true throughout elementary school. Group achievement tests are only an indication of skills level, and they need to be combined with other data for a better student profile. The consistently low test scores of at-risk students throughout elementary school indicate they might be a factor for identifying potential school dropouts.

The control group was eight months younger when they started first grade. Parental support in the control group that emphasizes school and tends to encourage the students to start earlier may be one reason. This may also be due to the many school changes of the at-risk students. One of the best reasons may be that twice as many of the at-risk students were retained in kindergarten and first grade.

An equal number of control and at risk students were in Chapter I Reading program. The Chapter I Reading programs address a wide variety of reading problems. Without knowing more specifically what the reading problems were and the length of time in the program, we are unable to draw any valid conclusions. This is also true for our special education data.

The last section of data indicates that almost twice as many of the control group lived with both parents. This may suggest that two-parent families contribute to a more supportive home environment.

In summary, it would appear that late second and early third grade seems to be the earliest that sufficient objective data can be collected to identify at-risk students.

Appendix II

Abstract

An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of PASS, A Junior High School Dropout Prevention Program

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of a junior high school dropout prevention intervention program, the Parallel Advocate Support System (PASS). This was accomplished using two approaches. First, the immediate indicators of program success examined — namely, reduction in suspensions and increased grade point average (GPA). Second, the dropout rates of program participants were compared with those of non-participants two years after treatment.

The sample was drawn from high-risk seventh, eighth, and ninth-grade students attending six junior high schools located in Fort Collins, Colorado. These students were identified as high-risk due to the presence of individual, family, and school factors that have been found to contribute to the decision of dropping out of school. The treatment group consisted of 126 PASS participants, 50 from the 1986-87 school year. The control group was made up 84 high-risk students from the three junior high schools that did not offer the PASS program.

Significant differences were found only for the dependent variables Last Term GPA and Dropout Status. Significant determinants of the Last Term GPA were participation in PASS, being held back in school, and student ethnicity. Factors significant in explaining the variance in the Dropout Status included participation in PASS, being held back in school, family structure, and gender.

It was concluded that the PASS Program is effective in improving GPA and reducing the tendency to drop out of school. It was further concluded that students held back a grade or more in school are more likely to have a lower GPA and more prone to drop out of school than those students who have never been held back. Results also indicated that students from single-parent homes are more likely to drop out than students from two-parent homes.

Using the Arts to Motivate the At-Risk Student

Jane F. Zenger

Program Description

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School in West Columbia, South Carolina, is a state-run residential school for at-risk secondary students. The agency serves approximately 200 students from nearly every county in the state. Most of the students range from 15 to 21 years old. They are enrolled at Wil Lou Gray Opportunity for a variety of reasons including truancy, family problems, learning disabilities, or problems coping in a traditional high school setting.

Wil Lou Gary Opportunity School teachers use a variety of teaching techniques and activities designed to motivate, inspire, and help build the added confidence these students need to excel and stay in school. The teachers have found that not only do the students love these activities, but their skills improve in many other areas as a result of the creative process.

Each year the teachers work with the local State Arts Commission, volunteers, and other fine arts teacher to provide a variety of activities designed to inspire the students and develop critical thinking skills.

Their process involves a combination of approaches using many kinds of artists including painters, weavers, musicians, mime troupes, poets, and actors. The artists work with teachers to include activities designed to encourage the skills associated with higher level thinking skills.

To better understand how the two areas are related, one needs to first look at the theoretical skills involved in higher level thinking. Robert Ennis defines critical thinking in three ways.

1. Ability to define and clarify such things as problems, issues, conclusions, reasons, assumptions
2. Ability to judge the credibility, relevance and consistency of information
3. Ability to infer or to solve problems and draw reasonable conclusions.

These three types of skills reflect the higher level skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in Bloom's (1956) taxonomy and educational objectives.

How can the teacher use this information, and what kinds of activities are likely to be helpful in nurturing these skills in the classroom? Raymond S. Nickerson (1981) suggests that the following teacher attitudes are important for helping students learn thinking skills:

1. A strong belief in the importance of learning and in the usefulness of and intrinsic value of knowledge.
2. A lively sense of curiosity and inquisitiveness.
3. A sense of pride in one's work and an appreciation of the importance of carefulness: careful listening, careful reading, careful work.
4. A proper regard for one's own intellectual potential and also for one's own fallibility.
5. Respect for opinions differing from one's own.

Robert Yinger puts it much more succinctly, "Critical thinking is part of other intellectual activities such as problem solving, decision making, or creative thinking."

Using art in the classroom is just one way Wil Lou Gary Opportunity School teachers reinforce these skills with their students. Their activities are designed to foster a non-threatening environment that motivates the under-motivated and stimulates creativity and communication in students with learning problems and poor socialization skills.

Let's look at a few examples of the types of artists and activities that have been used with at risk students at Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School.

(1) John Doc Howell is a singer who not only performs traditional folk songs, but also jazz, blues, Indian, and black soul music. He emphasizes writing and self-expression. He helps the students write their songs that he puts to music and introduces poetry through popular songs. He uses the "blues" to encourage students to express their own emotions. He introduces the idea of "theme" by examining the ideas of rejection, heartbreak and sorrow used by blues singers. His "rap" sessions about the influence of black music on jazz and rock is a history lesson for black students instilling cultural pride in their musical heritage.

(2) Express Theater, an acting and mime group gives a one-week workshop ending in a special performance that includes the class. Symbolism, body language, and attention to detail are all cognitive areas explored during the week. One activity involves watching the mime and using language to describe the emotions and feelings portrayed by the silent movements. The students then think of an emotion or idea and act out their classmates. This previsualization and carry through is an excellent method of teaching

the creative process.

3) A weaver worked with the students to expand on how to organize, visualize, plan, and complete a project. The weaver showed the students the basics involved with setting up a loom and how a variety of patterns could be designed. They had to use their imagination to draw the initial schematic. The activity involved planning, application, making adjustments, following complex procedures, all resulting in an original hand-made product.

(4) Another artist combined fabric design with creative writing. She taught the student to tie-dye cotton. Each made squares using bright colors and again, a procedure was taught showing how different techniques make different patterns. She then asked the students to express themselves by looking at their pattern and completing the sentence, "Happiness is . . . ." The squares were then put together as a quilt giving the class a sense of how individualized patterns fit together for a beautiful whole.

(5) Al Masarik, a local poet, has worked with our students several times. His unconventional methods emphasize the non-technical aspects of writing. His is more interested in showing the students the natural poetry in their lives. He begins with simple lines or words and is careful never to set anyone up for failure. Once he builds their self-esteem and confidence, he introduces more complex patterns that they can follow using their own words and ideas.

Not every artist works well with remedial, learning disabled, or at risk students. The teacher may wish to consider the following guidelines in selecting the right type of artist based on the needs of the individual class.

1. The students relate better to high performance artists, those individuals with an "up" personality using activities with high entertainment value.
2. Students need to be actively involved in the process. No lectures or boring readings or students quickly lose interest.
3. The artist needs to be sensitive to individual needs such as oral reading ability, cultural differences, student confidence and cognitive styles.
4. The artist needs to provide samples of the product and be willing to model the process step by step.
5. Choose artists who can draw on different modalities and learning styles. (Example — combining creative writing and quilting). Some students will respond to more kinesthetic (tactile), others to visual, and others to verbal(auditory) stimulus.
6. The artist needs to be flexible and patient.

Interestingly enough, many times the artist themselves had a difficult time in school and many of them highly identify with the at-risk student. The teachers urge the artist to talk with the students about their difficulties as a student and many of the artists have become role models for our students.

Community volunteers and the South Carolina Arts Commission is one of the best resources for bringing the arts into the classroom. Some other ways to expose students to art are:

1. Educational television and public radio stations
2. Local television and media
3. Lecture series and/or films and festivals
4. Museums
5. Have each student visit the library and get a library card
6. Community theater groups (students can volunteer for sets, usher, etc.)
7. Local story tellers

As you can see there are many ways to bring the arts into the classroom. The arts bring out the best in both students and teachers. The students will enjoy themselves so much they will not notice that, as they interact with the artists and their classmates, they are also practicing the highly valuable skills of analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating each learning experience.

Outcome Analysis of Comprehensive Programming for Enhancing Student Self-Concept and Reducing At-Risk Behaviors

Stephen O. Jambor

Numerous definitions of at-risk youth have appeared during the past decade as well as a plethora of intervention strategies. This explosion of concern has raised awareness of the dropout problem but has also created some confusion about the identification and treatment of the phenomena. The present research sought to address this situation by introducing one systematic approach to defining at-risk behavior, developing appropriate support, and experimentally analyzing the outcomes.

The at-risk sample in this study was high school students who were classified as emotionally handicapped according to the definitions of P.L.#94-142 (1975). These students categorically represent more off-task behavior, an aversion to school, low self-concept and a higher dropout rate than non-handicapped peers. It has also been argued that many of these students represent learning styles that are not readily aligned with traditional academic programs. As a result, occupational training has become the intuitive alternate option for them. The rationale of the training holds that the more sensorially oriented and visual-spatial-motoric activity, the more engaging the E.H. students' learning style. It has also been felt that the hands-on experience of competence in an alternate area of achievement would help break the cycle of failure and thereby become the cornerstone for a healthier self-concept. As sound as this reasoning might be, it has lacked both extensive empirical analysis of outcomes and of the more personal-social elements of programming, such as counseling, which would enhance self-concept and "unlock human potential."

Under the auspices of a competitive U.S. Department of Education grant, the T.A.H.S. sought to demonstrate how the comprehensive use of vocational, academic and counseling programming could effectively reduce at-risk behaviors and thereby ameliorate the dropout rate of E.H. students. The T.A.H.S. sample was matched to a control sample on the basis or presenting baseline off-task/at-risk behaviors. Data were gathered in a pore-post-test design for both samples in October and May of the 1989-90 school year. Intervention for the experimental T.A.H.S. sample consisted of vocational training accompanied by academic preparation for a high school diploma at one location.

Counseling was also mandated, and goals were operationally defined according to the presenting off-task behaviors. These goals incorporated objectives from the "Social Skills Curriculum," a program specifically developed to teach the components of self-concept. An active and deliberate attempt was made to integrate the elements of programming around this personal-social component so as to augment the otherwise serendipitous potential of vocational training for bolstering students' self-esteem. It was therefore precisely this outcome that the design sought to assess.

Pre-post-test comparisons were analyzed using MANCOVA statistics so as to partial out initial differences. Five areas of off-task/at-risk behavior were analyzed together with a total behavior quotient. The effects of I.Q. were controlled for, as well. Results evidenced significant differences in three of the five areas of behavior as well as the total off-task behavior score. These differences showed that the T.A.H.S. sample's at-risk behavior was appreciably reduced in comparison to the control group which had not received comprehensive programming, as defined previously.

A full discussion of these results included a qualitative analysis of the Social Skills Curriculum objectives that were attained by the students through counseling. In this way it was also demonstrated how the Counseling Act could be adapted specifically to students' needs and monitored for behavioral change. The outcomes of this study showed how two traditionally recommended approaches to off-task/at-risk behavior (vocational training and counseling) could be more effectively used in programming to enhance self-concept and "unlocked human potential."

Section Six

Changing The System

How severe will the at-risk problem ultimately become in the next few years? Unless individuals and groups unite as agencies and work together, disaster is knocking at the door. Dr. Otis Johnson, the Executive Director of Savannah's *Youth Futures Initiative,* predicts: "that sooner or later, people in this country and this state (GA) and this community (Savannah) will realize that doing things the same old way is going to keep us with the same old problems. . . . All of our children must become productive adults. If they don't, we will all pay and pay and pay in terms of welfare and crime and unemployment." These words are having an effect on the Savannah community and school district.

Is your community willing to deal with more crime, increase in taxes, more violence in individual neighborhoods, and the other problems caused by the at-risk population? This is the product to whom Dr. Johnson refers. Those who have suffered failure after failure are becoming the criminals, prisoners, homeless, and permanent welfare recipients of today and tomorrow. Can we dare be content with letting the current at-risk population continue in its suffering and downhill slide? Or as Harold Howe (*Education Week,* Dec. 12, 1990) notes, "Does America really care about the society on which its future depends" to make the needed changes?

The erosion of the family, from its developmental stages through the growth of its members has greatly contributed to the plight of the at risk. Those organizations that can impact the family must become involved in the at-risk crisis. The ideas presented in Section Six affirm that concept. Also offered in this section are suggestions of possible interventions to be utilized for changing the system. Some are as radical and as innovative as they need to be to change the system. Nevertheless, communities must examine and evaluate their collaborative efforts to determine if they are getting to the underlying source of the problem(s). Agencies and individual organizations must determine their effectiveness in handling interventions. Questions such as: "Do they need assistance?" or "Does a new strategy need to be used?" need to be dealt with. Barriers need to be removed. These questions and others must be considered if we are ever to be in a position to eliminate basic at-risk problems.

Howe II, Harold. (December 12, 1990). The Gap in Our Thinking About Kids. *Education Week,* p. 48.

At-Risk Students and the Dilemma of Grade Bifurcation

Ernest G. Rigney, Jr., and Robert E. Tournier

Introduction

Many of us first become aware of at-risk students when we confront grade bifurcation in the classroom. Grade bifurcation refers to a grading situation in which a majority of the class seems quite capable of earning the usual assortment of passing grades— very few "A's," some "B's," a larger number of "C's," and a few "D's." However, also present in the same class are a sizable number of students apparently capable of earning only a few "C's," a larger number of "D's," and a disconcerting and increasing number of "F's." Many of the poor grades reflect a fundamental lack of ability; yet, a proportion of the poor grades seems to be the result of inadequate study skills because some of the students earning "F's" and "D's" are neither lazy nor indifferent. They are trying; but, most unfortunately, are not succeeding.

Grade bifurcation creates the following dilemma. If we alter our pedagogical approach in order to make the course more accessible to students in the lower-half of the class, we risk losing the interest of students in the upper-half. If we do nothing, the bottom-half of the class will continue along a frustrating path toward a less than satisfactory academic result.

A number of scholars have traced the existence of grade bifurcation to the diverse and changing characteristics of contemporary college students. Bassis (1986: 2), for example, sees student diversity as a crucial issue in undergraduate education: *Among the most significant characteristics of . . . new students is their lack of preparation for a traditional college curriculum. . . . Not only are they considerably more self-concerned and vocationally oriented than their counterparts in previous eras, they are less accepting of traditional academic values and less willing to engage in serious academic study.*

A more pessimistic view of the potential problems associated with student diversity is provided by Rau and Baker (1989: 170, 171): *Faculty . . . are confronted with classes in which the range of students' skills is beyond management and sometimes beyond belief. A student with the ability and motivation to succeed at Harvard will sit next to a student who scores in the bottom two percent on the Nelson-Denny reading test. The instructor is expected to educate both. . . . Perhaps Socrates or Jesus Christ could have educated this range of students, but most faculty members do not care for the taste of hemlock. Nor can they walk on water.*

To address the problems associated with student diversity, many institutions have implemented programs to assist at-risk students. One specific strategy has been the utilization of special courses to address the needs of at-risk students at some point in their academic careers. These courses usually cover a variety of topics ranging from learning academic survival skills to personal health issues. At our institution (a public, four-year liberal arts college) there are two such courses. The first is a "freshmen seminar" prevention course that teaches students academic survival skills necessary for a successful transition from high school to college. A second course, the goal of which is intervention rather than prevention, is directed toward advanced students on the verge of academic probation; essentially, this course teaches at-risk students the same "learning strategies" taught entering students during "freshmen seminar."

Remedial education programs and services address some of the problems associated with student diversity and grade bifurcation; other problems remain. One such problem is noted by McKinney (1988: 300): "If you intend to ask your students to reach higher than they have in the past, you will be successful only if their experience is not frustrating." Succinctly, the problem is providing students with grading opportunities that are not experienced as frustrating; and, at the same time, providing them with opportunities that are not mere contrivances intended to artificially inflate their grades.

While there is some empirical evidence suggesting that remedial programs and services are successful, our concerns were somewhat different. More specifically, we addressed this question: Is it possible and practical to incorpor-ate selected components of a "learning skills" course into a regular college class whereby we legitimately assist at-risk students without imposing unnecessary "busy work" on other students?

Amelioration Strategies[1]

Based on what we learned from a number of "remediation workshops," we agreed that it was both possible and practical to implement two components of a "learning skills" course into a regular college class. The two components were: first, grading students on attendance and second, grading students on chapter outlines of the basic textbook used in a course. To us it seemed reasonable to assume that most students should be successful in their classes if they do at least two things. First, they should attend class regularly so that they have a complete set of lecture notes and benefit from any class discussions. And, second, students should develop and follow a schedule whereby they conscientiously complete assigned readings on time. In other words, if students attend class and conscientiously complete assigned readings, they should not experience undue frustration in earning acceptable grades in their college courses.

An attendance grade accounted for 10 percent of all students' course grades (see Appendix A). Consistent attendance was not an option, since it was required of all students enrolled in the course. Our attendance policy was intended to curb or, hopefully, eliminate unauthorized "cuts." If a student had a legitimate excuse, one documented by the dean of undergraduate studies' office, the absence was not officially recorded and thereby did not affect the student's course grade.

The importance of reading assigned materials was reinforced by grading students on their outlines of the main textbook. The main textbook used in the course consisted of 10 chapters. If a student outlined each of the 10 chapters, the averaged outlining grade accounted for 10 percent of the student's course grade. If a student decided to outline only five chapters, the averaged grade accounted for 5 percent of his or her course grade. And, if a student decided not to outline any chapters, that students's final exam grade would account for 50 percent of his or her course grade. The outlining grade was an option: no one had to do it. We emphasized that the quality of their work determined their outlining grade, not the mere fact that they completed an outline. In addition, we assiduously detailed what we were looking for in their chapter outlines. That is, students were told to include in each of their outlines the following: main chapter headings, sub-headings, concepts, theories, and research studies. If there was something that they did not fully understand, students were told to mark it with an asterisk — for all "marked" material we provided a written explanation on each student's outline; and, if several students had marked the same item, we covered the problematic item during a lecture.

Finally, for purposes of research, a "raw" grade was calculated for each student. "Raw grade" refers to the grade which would have been achieved by eliminating the attendance and outlining grades. By eliminating the effects of the outlining and attendance grades, the "raw grade" functioned as a base-line measurement for purposes of comparison. The "raw grade" was calculated in the following manner:

First Exam = 25 percent of course grade.
Second Exam = 25 percent of course grade.
Final Exam = 50 percent of course grade.

Brief Description of Course and Students

The amelioration strategies were implemented in an introductory social psychology class meeting five days a week during the summer of 1987 — a total of 21 class sessions. We taught the course using a lecture-discussion format. Twenty-seven students were enrolled in the course. Eight students were designated on the class roster as seniors, 12 as juniors, four as sophomores, and three as freshmen. Eighteen students were female and nine were male. Fourteen students were declared sociology majors and the remaining thirteen students were majoring in some other area or were undeclared.

Results

Twenty-five students selected the outlining option, two did not. Of the 25 students, 13 outlined 10 chapters of the main textbook, six outlined nine chapters, two outlined seven chapters, one outlined six chapters, two outlined four chapters, and one student outlined only one chapter. In terms of attend-ance, eight students attended every class, 14 students missed between one and three class sessions, and five students missed between four and six class sessions. Table 1 demonstrates that the amelioration strategies did work:

Table 1

Effectiveness of Techniques on Students' Course Grades

Course Grades	Number of Students Whose Course Grades Were Raised	Number of Students Whose Course Grades Were Not Raised
A's and B's	15 percent (2)	58 percent (7)
C's and D's	85 percent (11)	42 percent (5)
	Fisher's p = .0335	Estimated ϕ = .37

Table 1 suggests two things. First, the course grades of 13 students were increased as a result of including the attendance and outlining grades. The course grades of 12 students were unchanged. There is a moderate relationship existing between amelioration strategies and course grade (ϕ = .37).

Second, of the 13 students whose letter grades were improved, three went from "F" to "D," six went from "D" to "C," three went from "C" to "C+," and one student went from "B" to "B+." Consequently, it would appear that the amelioration strategies did, in fact, work for at-risk students without artifically bloating the grades of other students.

Conclusions and Discussion

What does this mean in terms of pedagogy? Were our efforts successful or not? Clearly, the amelioration strategies helped some at-risk students. But, were these students helped in the manner we intended? We feel that the increase in course grades was not a mere artifact; in other words, the increase was not a scholastic "pay-off" to students because they ritualistically engaged in "busy work." After all, "busy work" should have improved the course grades of more than 13 of the 25 students who availed themselves of the ancillary grading opportunities. By encouraging them to outline the textbook and by grading them on attendance, at-risk students did improve their academic performance.

We have demonstrated that it is both possible and practical to complement a lecture/discussion class with selected components from a "learning skills" course. More importantly, we found that complementing a traditional college class is effective.

As could be expected, there are certain limitations associated with our approach. First, our sample is admittedly small. In fact, we feel that attempting this with large classes would be extremely problematic. In large classes, a teaching assistant would be mandatory because too much time would be wasted by the instructor in merely taking attendance. Second, even in small classes, there is a tendency for the instructor to quickly feel more like an "administrator" of the class rather than a professor. We want to be quite clear about this: Carefully reading and commenting on even 25 students' outlines will consume enormous blocks of the instructor's (or teaching assistant's) time. However, in small classes, we conclude that our approach will be moderately successful in curtailing grade bifurcation; and, the improvement in academic performance will be more than an artificial improvement.

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APPENDIX A: Excerpts from Course Syllabus:

Attendance: Come to class. Most of the material on the exams will be presented directly in class. If you do not come to class, you will not do well in this course. I will take roll. I tend to be pretty unsympathetic to people who miss class. If you are consistently late or leave class early, I will lower your course grade.

Number of Absences	Grade
0	96
1	89
2	84
3	79
4	74
5	66
6	55
7	If you miss this many classes, you will receive a "WA" for the course.

Grading: Your course grade will be determined in the following fashion:

First Exam= 20 percent of course grade
Second Exam= 20 percent of course grade
Final Exam= 40 percent of course grade
Attendance= 10 percent of course grade
Outlines= 10 percent of course grade

The following numerical scores and corresponding letter equivalents will be used on exams and in determining your course grade:

100 - 92 = A
91 - 87 = B+
86 - 82 = B
81 - 77 = C+
76 - 72 = C
71 - 62 = D
61 and below = F

Chapter Outlines: You are responsible for outlining each of the 10 chapters in Karp and Yoels' textbook. During the first class session, I will describe to you how this is to be done. All outlines must be turned in when due; late outlines will be lowered a letter grade. The outlines will be graded in the following manner:

96 = A
89 = B+
84 = B
79 - C+
74 = C
66 = D

Endnote

[1] It would no doubt be comforting to note that a careful search of the literature pertaining to "grading" and "grades" would provide at least minimal leads that could be used to remedy or ameliorate grade bifurcation. Most unfortunately this is not the case. The literature focusing on "grading" or "grades" did not really address the issue of grade bifurcation or student diversity. We did find discussions of the pros and cons of various techniques for assigning grades (e.g., Terwilliger: 1971). Also, we found arguments in opposition to traditional grading and in support of alternate approaches to student evaluation (e.g., Kirschenbaun, Napier, and Simon: 1971). And, finally, we located articles empirically assessing the link between grades and other factors such as effort, socioeconomic status, age, and gender (e.g., Schuman, Walsh, Olson, and Etheridge: 1985; and Neuman: 1989).

For the most part this literature was interesting and informative; yet, it still did not tell us how to alleviate grade bifurcation.

Challenging At-Risk Youth in a University Setting

Anita Tully and Beth A. Curry

According to one young Nintendo expert on our campus, when players wish to advance to a higher level in some games, they turn up the speed to a level that is faster than they know they can play. While they play faster and harder at this speed than is comfortable, when they return to their old level, they find it to be leisurely by comparison. A virtuoso in another medium, Ruth Sczlnzenska, noted in a master class in piano which she gave some years ago that she always began her daily practice routine by playing through a difficult piece which was still beyond her skills. She allowed herself mistakes, often many of them, but she attempted to keep the tempo and finish the composition. Then she turned to her normal scales, arpeggios, and the disciplined work with material already in her repertoire. At then end of her practice session, she went back to the challenge piece and played it again. Invariably, this concert pianist found that she played with ease passages beyond her skill during the earlier attempt.

These two examples illustrate the principle behind the success of the Nicholls State-

Youth Opportunities Program. Five years of summer dropout prevention programs have yielded an 80 to 90 percent success rate in keeping junior high school students in school until graduation. From our follow-up conversations and other data, this fact emerged: students found schoolwork, homework, and even social demands to be well within their comfort zone after spending seven weeks living and working on a college campus. This program includes the same ingredients as Sczlnzenska's practice session: genuine challenges accompanied by steady work on the fundamentals of success.

The biggest challenge to the self-confidence, as well as the skills of these seventh- and eighth-graders, in the Nicholls State-Youth Opportunities Unlimited program is the job each of them is given in a university office or worksite. For four hours each day, students work with computers, handle callers, run errands on campus, maintain labs in working order, and provide the temporary staffing which many departments lack during the summer months. For all participants, this four-hour demonstration of their ability to perform in the working world is the high-speed, high-intensity part of their NS-YOU day. Some leave their jobs after lunch visibly nervous; all confess some apprehension to their counselors. At the end of the summer, however, staff and students alike realize that driving the success of the entire NS-YOU program is the university employment: the rewards of the paycheck, the mastery of the nerves at meeting the public, the pride in the skills and experience gained in the performance of their jobs.

Work experience is the heart of most JTPA-funded job training program. At Nicholls State, however, job training is blended into a residential program which closely imitates the life of a university student. Participants live in the dorm except on weekends; they rise at 6 a.m., breakfast in the cafeteria at 7 a.m., and are in morning classes at 7:30 a.m. After lunch, they have jobs resembling those of student workers. At 4:30 p.m., they have supper. Only in the evenings does the NS-YOU program continue a structured approach to dormitory life, when a regular college student would have a broad zone of leisure stretching ahead. Evenings for NS-YOU students include study hall, small-group counseling, career programming, health counseling including safe sex, and recreation. For some students, the strenuous daily schedule is the other challenge; most are ready for bed when lights out at 9:30 p.m. comes around. In each of the three basic components of the program, the balance between challenge and comfort exists: academics, job training, and evening programming.

In the academic component, morning classes are taught by a certified teacher. Students are placed according to need as determined by CTBS pretesting in math and reading. After 90 contact hours of instruction in reading or math, gains on the CTBS post-test have been uniformly positive, often startling: some students improve two or three grade levels in that time. Since the mere fact of teaching reading or math in a college classroom cannot accomplish in seven weeks what a teacher failed to do in an entire year, these results are clearly tied to some other cause. Two factors are different within the NS-YOU program. First, the level of support for students' daily efforts is intense: teachers have small classes and are assisted by a full-time classroom aid; counselors keep up with students' work and give them constant support and encouragement; and finally students spend an hour each evening in supervised study, at their desks in their dorm rooms with a counselor nearby to encourage and assist. This latter element alone is significant: some students study more in the seven weeks of the NS-YOU program than they have in their entire previous school career. One additional relationship should be noted: the college students who serve as counselors for the participants are nearly all attending classes during their off-hours as well. During dorm meetings, these students announce their upcoming tests and report the results as part of the group commitment to academic success.

Both counselors and students are praised and rewarded for solid performances. Teachers coordinate classroom activities around the challenge model: difficult work is followed by concentrated work on the fundamentals. Successful attempts at higher-level work are noted, praised, reinforced.

An afternoon worksite staff consisting of a supervisor and three student assistants monitor worksites constantly to maintain the same atmosphere of renewed challenges and applied effort within the comfort zone. From students considered by their school counselors to be dropout material come finished products on the job that impress university staff and officials: one group inventoried the business library and published a spiralbound catalog for the use of students and faculty. They mastered a simple computer database in doing so and provided other faculty with indexes of their office materials accessible by author, publisher, and topic. Students at one unique worksite, an archaeological dig at a Civil War plantation site, used surveying equipment to lay out the excavation squares, washed and cataloged finds, and produced a written report of their work. Another crew completely refurbished the athletic complex, repainting lockers and walls, repairing equipment, inventorying supplies and materials. The program made sure that students were not relegated to janitorial tasks and that each week contained challenge activities as well as routine daily tasks.

Supporting the job-training component of the program were over 35 university staff and faculty, professionals who included an adolescent in their daily routines and gave them an introduction to the world of work. In recruiting these persons to be part of the NS-YOU program, the university tapped into a deep well of human compassion and concern for the disadvantaged which has flowed generously for over five years. Clearly, a university program of this scope has no prospect of success without the willingness of faculty and staff at all levels to become a part of a dropout intervention/prevention program.

Evening programs which present career options contain the challenge motif, as counselors instill the idea in participants that many fields are waiting for them. Recreational opportunities merge participants with college students on tennis courts and in gymnasiums. Mealtimes in the cafeteria are opportunities for junior high school students to blend effectively with regular college students. Each part of the program is designed to help a participant look upon the intimidating world of higher education and say, after seven weeks, "I can do this." After mastering the complex world of a college campus, NS-YOU students return to local schools with a new view of themselves. They have met challenges usually reserved for students much older, more sophisticated, and more skilled. In a university environment, adolescents learn to keep the tempo and play through the piece until the end. When they come back to their own schools, finishing the whole program seems much easier.

A Study of Program Results

With programs such as the NS-YOU program, the opportunities for research are great. Many components of the program are filled with potentially significant information. Most urgent, though, is whether the program helps the participants make significant academic gains and whether over a period of time these gains can be retained.

The dropout rate of high school adolescents in Louisiana is approximately 43 percent. This is one of the highest dropout rates in the United States. Some factors associated with dropping out are low income status, poor academic achievement, low self-esteem, poor attitudes toward school, high rates of absenteeism, arrests, and large or single-parent families.

For minority adolescents with one or more of these problems, school plays an important role in fostering their cognitive development. Research has shown that academic achievement of minority adolescents usually declines during the summer months. Since only a few minority adolescents participate in traditional summer schools, their test scores decline during this time period because of the lack of an academically enriched and supportive environment. A program such as NS-YOU can play a significant role in providing the environment that minority and disadvantaged youth lack and not only reinforcing academic gains but adding to them.

Methods

Selection of Participants

All participants were identified by their schools' counselors as potential dropouts using indicators such as low academic achievement, low self-esteem, external locus of control, eighth-grade repeater, and family financial problems. All participants were 14 or 15 years old and either repeating the eighth grade or entering the ninth grade.

Eligibility was determined based on low-income guidelines set by the Job Training Partnership Act and the Louisiana Department of Labor. Adolescents eligible were those in families receiving one or more of the following: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Social Security Insurance (SSI), and Food Stamps. Also automatically eligible were those adolescents who were foster children or had a handicap as a barrier to employment.

The eligible students were assigned to either a treatment group (N=30) or control group (N=30) using stratified random selection. The total population of all available students was divided into four groups: black males, white males, black females, and white females. The groups were chosen using a table of random numbers.

Instrumentation

The three instruments used were the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), the Self-Esteem Inventories (SEI), and the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E Scale).

Procedures

Both the treatment and control groups were pretested at the beginning of the summer program and post-tested at the end of the summer program. Treatment and control group subjects were follow-up tested six months after the post-testing date. All testing took place under the same conditions. The tests were administered in the following order: 1. CTBS Reading Subtests, 2. CTBS Mathematics Subtests, 3. SEI, and 4. I-E Scale.

Results

Mean differences indicated that in all areas the treatment group made significant gains while the control group showed dramatic declines from pretest to post-test. At the time of the six-month follow-up testing, both groups showed increases in all areas but those of the treatment group were significant while those of the control group were not.

In analyzing the data for the reading scores, the mean scores for the treatment group increased from pretest ($\underline{M}$=6.29) to post-test ($\underline{M}$=7.39). During the same time period, the mean scores for the control group decreased from pretest ($\underline{M}$=8.04) to post-test ($\underline{M}$=6.56). At the time of the six month follow-up testing, the mean scores for the treatment group increased by four academic months from post-test ($\underline{M}$=7.39) to follow-up test ($\underline{M}$=7.80). Although the control group also made gains during this time, their mean scores increased by 1.5 academic months from post-test ($\underline{M}$=6.56) to follow-up test ($\underline{M}$=6.73).

In analyzing the data for the mathematics scores, the mean scores for the treatment group increased from pretest ($\underline{M}$=8.06) to post-test ($\underline{M}$=8.37). During the same time period, the mean scores for the control group decreased from pretest ($\underline{M}$=8.65) to post-test ($\underline{M}$=7.02). At the time of the six-month follow-up testing, the mean scores for the treatment group increased by five academic months from post-test (M=8.37) to follow-up test (M=8.88). Although the control group also made gains during this time, their mean scores increased by 2.5 academic months from post-test (M=7.02) to follow-up test (M=7.29).

In analyzing the data for the self-esteem scores, the mean scores for the treatment group actually decreased during the course of the program from pretest (M=68.8) to post-test (M=65.4). During the same time period, the mean scores for the control group decreased dramatically from pretest (M=69.0) to post-test (M=54.6). At the time of the six month follow-up testing, the mean scores for the treatment group increased from post-test (M=65.4) to follow-up test (M=71.0). Although the control group also made gains during this time period their mean self-esteem scores were still far below that of their counterparts in the treatment group, with an increase from post-test (M=54.6) to follow-up test (M=63.0).

In analyzing the data for the locus of control scores, the mean scores for the treatment group were slightly more external from pretest (M=10.3) to post-test (M=10.5). During the same time period, the mean scores for the control became much more external from pretest (M=10.1) to post-test (M=13.6). At the time of the six month follow-up testing, the mean scores for the treatment group had become more internal from post-test (M=10.5) to follow-up test (M=9.7). The control group also became more internal during this time period but their mean locus of control scores were still far more external than the treatment group, with a decrease from post-test (M=13.6) to follow-up test (M=11.5).

The results of the present study provide evidence that the treatment group maintained the gains made on the post-test and surpassed their control group counterparts based on their follow-up test scores in the areas of reading, mathematics, self-esteem, and locus of control. Therefore, the adolescents in the treatment group have a better chance of remaining in school than those in the control group. This is further supported by research that indicates that low-income adolescents who experience repeated successes in academic achievement are more likely to develop a more positive feeling about themselves and their school environment and thus remain in school longer than their counterparts who continue to encounter failure.

The Provisional Year — A Special Freshman Admissions Program at USC

J. Thomas Davis and G. James Burns

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Provisional Year is to make available within the University of South Carolina's Columbia campus a means to serve a special portion of the student constituency of this state who might otherwise be denied entrance into the University.

Students admitted to this program are selected from a group who present both qualitative and quantitative evidence of potential for academic success at the University of South Carolina. Consistent with the established philosophy of the College of Applied Professional Sciences, which administers and conducts the Provisional Year, the program emphasizes individual concern for students, teaching excellence, counseling, and career planning.

The primary goals of the Provisional Year are to provide intensive academic instruction; to improve the effectiveness of academic study, performance, and communication skills; to develop analytical reasoning skills; to prepare students to make appropriate degree, program, and career choices; and to ensure that students are academically prepared to work productively in their selected fields of study.

Admissions and Retention

Enrollment is limited to 250 students. Students offered admission to this program are drawn from freshman applicants whose predicted grade point average as determined by the USC admissions formula is at least 1.75 but less than 2.0. In addition, these entering freshman must present strong evidence for future academic growth and performance as indicated by such criteria as (1) high class rank but marginal SAT scores, or (2) high SAT scores but marginal class rank, or (3) special talents in disciplines such as art or music.

At summer orientation, students meet with their advisors who serve as instructors in special University 101 sections. Close student/advisor relationships aimed at fostering student retention is stressed.

Since these courses are intended for application to baccalaureate programs, continued communication and cooperation is required among all related academic areas. Responsibility for determining the applicability of these courses to baccalaureate programs lies with the various collegiate/departmental facilities of the baccalaureate programs.

Transfer

1. In order to be considered for admission to a baccalaureate degree program, a student must successfully complete a minimum of 30 hours and meet the admission requirements of the appropriate degree granting academic unit.
2. A student who has not met the requirement for admission to a degree program at the conclusion of the Provisional Year may not continue at USC-Columbia.

Provisional Year Curriculum

	Fall		Spring
1.	ENGL 100U - Basic Writing or ENGL 101U - Composition	1.	ENGL 101U - Composition or ENGL 102U - Composition and Literature
2.	PRSC 208U - Contemporary Issues or PRSC 108U - The United States	2.	PRSC 208U - Contemporary Issues or PRSC 108U - The United States
3.	PSYC 101U - Introduction to Psychology or PRSC 222U - Oral Communications Psychology	3.	PSYC 101U - Introduction to Psychology or PRSC 222U - Oral Communications Psychology
4.	One course in Mathematics or Science	4.	Other course in Mathematics or Science
5.	University 101U	5.	Elective (selected from area of major interest after consultation with advisor)

Expectations

Students who successfully complete the Provisional Year will have been given a chance to realize their academic potential within a university environment. A continuing review of this program will be implemented in order to determine if the program is achieving its aims. During the third year of this program, an evaluation will be conducted by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee which, in turn, will submit recommendations to the Faculty Senate for the Faculty Senate's action concerning continuation or alteration of the program.

Elements of the Student Contract

1. The Provisional Year student must enroll in five of the specified courses each semester and maintain full-time status (at least 12 hours per semester) in order to remain in the program.

   Students who wish either to drop a course and/or complete up to two courses in summer school must obtain the prior approval of the College's Committee on Scholastic Standards and Petitions. No student, however, will be retained in the program if the student fails to complete 12 hours in each of the Fall and Spring semester.
2. In the course of 12 months, the Provisional Year student must successfully complete the specific 30 semester hour program and must attain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 in order to be considered for admission to a baccalaureate degree granting unit at USC-Columbia.
3. That student must meet the specific requirements for transfer into the appropriate baccalaureate granting academic unit.
4. At the end of 30 hours, a student who does not meet the requirements for admission into a baccalaureate program at USC-Columbia may not continue on this course. Prior to leaving, the student will receive careful guidance regarding other educational and career opportunities.
5. A student who withdraws from the Provisional Year Program for legitimate medical reasons may be permitted to return to complete the program. Both medical withdrawal and reinstatement must be approved by the CollegeCommittee on Scholastic Standards and Petitions.

The Alternative Center As A Significant Force In School Retention: A Local Perspective

Charles M. (Toby) Hill and Danny C. Carpenter

Monograph

Beginning in 1987, Houston County Georgia Board of Education has made a substantial commitment to dropout prevention efforts. The cornerstone of these efforts, on the secondary level, is the Elberta Center. The Elberta Center is a grades 7-12 school designed specifically for at-risk students. The following is a description of the philosophical and operational aspects of the Elberta Center for at-risk youth.

In preparation for meeting the diverse needs of today's young people, plans for dropout prevention need to focus on the forces that affect the development of the "whole child." In that no one segment of society can bear the full responsibility for improving such forces as poverty, nontraditional or disrupted families and the increasing pressure our society has on young people, a new mentality of collaboration has been developed. Emphasis has been placed on creating strong linkages among schools, parents, community agencies, businesses, adult education, and institutions of higher learning. The Elberta Center was established as an outgrowth of this philosophy of collaboration.

The Center itself features a staff of 14 teachers and an in-school suspension instructor. It is supported by staff, administration, and counseling, offering a general academic course of study leading to a fully accredited high school diploma. The school has a principal, an assistant principal, and a counselor. This staff is also supported by J.T.P.A. personnel, two aides in childcare, and a full-time Student Assistance Program (SAP) counselor provided by the Houston County Drug Action Council (HODAC). Office space for personnel with the Educational Opportunity Center is also provided. They provide services for economically disadvantaged students in the general and adult education programs. These services include assisting in Pell Grant application, touring of vocational schools, and administering vocational assessment tests. The Elberta Center staff also are involved in providing tutors for the adult literacy program. Additionally, the Center focuses on interagency cooperation including community mentors, Head Start, Literacy and GED, Health Department, J.T.P.A., Mental Health, Juvenile Court and Vocational Education Services which are all available to the at-risk students in one facility.

Another important component of the Elberta Center is the teen parenting program. Child Care and hospital-homebound services are provided in the Center for 20 teenage youth who are either pregnant or are already parents. These students participate in this program on a voluntary basis, motivated by a desire to optimize their opportunity to receive a high school diploma. Transportation is provided by the Middle Georgia Community Action Council. Elberta Center will add a probation tutoring program February 1, 1991 in cooperation with the Juvenile Division of the Houston Country Court Services. These students will be provided tutors at the Center four nights per week. The grade range of these students will be from fifth grade through twelfth grade. The teachers coordinating this tutoring program will be from the Elberta Center and are already trained to deal with at-risk students.

The following chart list all agencies that interact to provide services at the Elberta Center.

Elberta Center

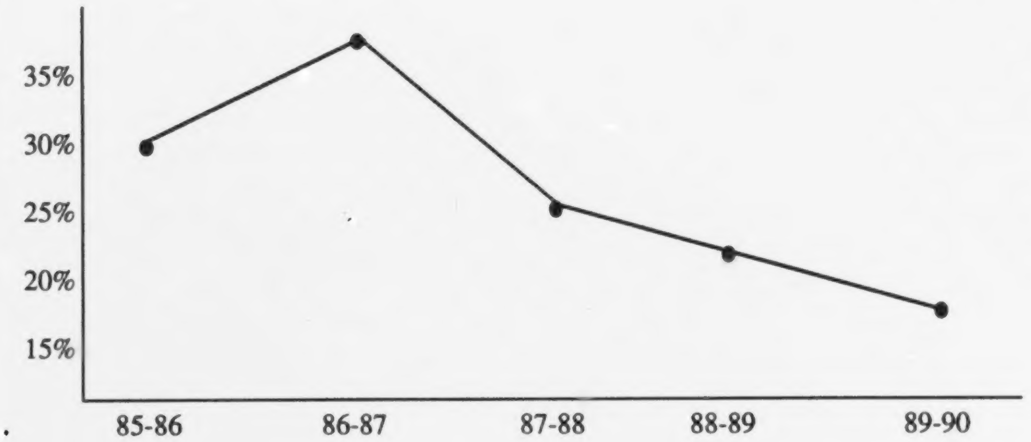
Student population 175-225
At-Risk Youth
(14 teachers, 2 administrators,
1 counselor, 1 ISS)
JPTA
DFACS
Juvenile Offender Tutoring
Police Precinct
Student Assistant Program
Health Dept.
Educational Opportunity Center
Teen Parenting

General Academic Curriculum

Since the inception of the Elberta Center, results in terms of student retention have been dramatic. For the past three years, the Houston County School System dropout rate has been reduced by 6 percentage points (25 percent to 19 percent). Fifty-seven percent of those students assigned to the Center either returned to one of the system's regular high schools or graduated from the Elberta Center itself.

Table 1 depicts a historical view of the system's dropout rate before and after the inception of the Alternative School program as a Dropout Prevention Center:

Table I



1985 - 86
Annual Rate - Project 12 year rate

2.5 30 percent

1986 - 87
Inception of Dropout Prevention Center
3.1 37.2 percent

1987 - 88
2.1 25.2 percent

1988 - 89
1.8 21.6 percent

1989 - 90
1.6 19.2 percent

Student Population

The student population at the Elberta Center is established from six groups of at-risk students.

The first of these groups is the *Academic Probation Student.* Those students who are 16 years of age or older and have not received passing grades for more than two consecutive semesters for one-half of their academic courses are assigned to the Elberta Center. At the beginning of the semester, academic probation students represent 55 percent of the Elberta Center population. These students may return to their home schools while remaining on academic probation, after passing a majority of their academic courses. If these students once again fail at their regular school, they are re-entered at the dropout prevention center until their graduation.

The next category of admissions is through *Student Review Committee* referral. After appropriate due process, many students who have had chronic discipline problems in their home schools are assigned to the dropout prevention center. The length of assignment can vary from 1-10 semesters. The average length of assignment is 1-1/2 semesters. Thirty-three percent of the student population at the beginning of each semester are S.R.C. referrals. This percentage grows as the semester passes in that S.R.C. referrals are admitted at anytime during the semester.

A third method of entry is *Principal-Parent Request.* Occasionally, the parents and the home school principal of a student who is at-risk academically or socially will decide together that the student would benefit from the smaller class size, increased structure, and supportive services provided at the dropout prevention center. Many of the students who enter via the parent/principal request route have had a history of negative self concept, dysfunctional behavior, and/or a shattered family life. They find the supportive and less intensive social atmosphere of the Elberta Center more conducive to their needs than that of a large, impersonal high school.

Principal/parent request for the students who are primarily discipline problems, in absence of other dysfunctions, are not approved. Principal/parent request represent 4 percent of the student population. This category is reflected in the academic probation percentage.

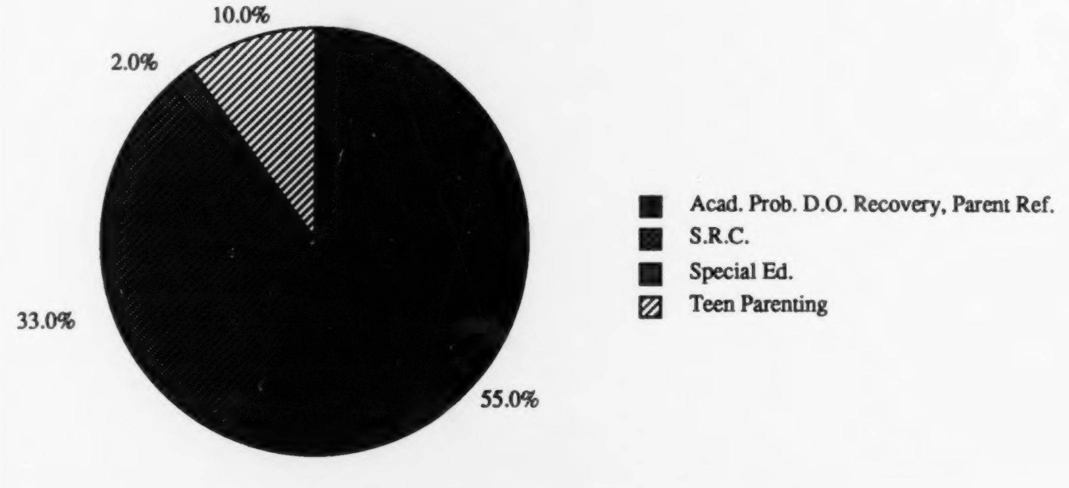
The fourth method of admission is the *Teen Parenting* Program. Admission is upon request by the student and parents after consulting with her counselors. Certain priorities for admission relating to the age and prospects for successful completion are in place. No student who has had a discipline history is granted this privilege. This represents 10 percent of the population.

The fifth method of admission is through the *Special Education Placement Committee.* As is the case with S.R.C. placement, Special Education Students whose discipline records warrant alternative placement supported by special education services are placed at the Elberta Center. Fewer than 10 students are enrolled at the Dropout Prevention Center as a result of Special Education Placement. These students are served by a Special Education teacher on staff. This constitutes 2 percent of student population.

The final method of admission is *Dropout Recovery*. This consists of students who have dropped out during their senior year and need a year or less to graduate. These students are considered too old to enter the regular high school but are entered at Elberta under special provisions.

Figure 1 represents the Six Admission Categories at the Dropout Prevention Center and the approximate percentage of the student population represented by each at the beginning

FIGURE 1



of each semester.

Elberta Dropout Prevention Center is an education network of various components which focuses on the multiple academic and psycho/social needs of each individual at-risk student. A summary of these operational components are:

Curriculum

The Elberta Center provides its students with the opportunity to receive a general diploma. This course of study requires 22 Carnegie units for graduation. A student must take four units of English, two units of math, two units of science, three units of social studies, one unit of health and P.E., one unit of fine arts, Computer technology, and/or vocational education, and nine units of elective credit.

In that most students at the Elberta Center have had a poor academic history, a different strategy for supporting academic performance has been developed.

The strategies for supporting academic performance are as follows:

1. Some students who fail to turn in notebooks or homework stay after school .
2. A ten-minute study period prior to every test (no poptests) is suggested.
3. More individual attention on specific learning difficulties is provided.
4. Three-week progress reports to parents must be signed and returned. These state numerical grade, conduct, and suggestions for academic improvements.
5. Positively Oriented Conferences with those students who are not performing up to expectations.
6. School policy — you don't work — you don't stay. Refusal to work after administrative intervention and parent notification and conference will lead to home suspension. This process is documented for a period of time.
7. Increased counseling efforts by homeroom teachers who review progress report with students and discuss problems.
8. Documentation of failure to work or inappropriate behavior. Every staff member here is required to document academic and behavior problems for use in parent conferences and to alert the administrative staff to intervene in this behavior.

What Makes Elberta Different

The extraordinary success of the Elberta Center can be traced to the following:

1. *Caring Teachers*

The most important factor is firm but caring teachers.

2. *Positive Philosophy*

Positive philosophy in dealing with at-risk students.

3. *Progress Reports*

A closer working relationship with parents by the use of three-week progress reports. This includes not only a numerical average but written comments to enable parents to assist in helping their child become successful. Our teachers take a different approach to conferences. Many teachers and administrators are on the defensive when conducting parent conferences. Our teachers are taught to state the concern and give positive comments when appropriate. They also share documentation and spend time with the parent. They also encourage them to keep close contact with the school. Parents are encouraged to call the school at any time.

7. *JTPA*

A "try-out" work experience program for disadvantaged students is in place at the Elberta Center.

8. *Interagency*

Interagency Room/Job Corps, Health Department

HODAC, Juvenile Court, DARE Pro-

gram, Peachbelt Mental
Health, SAP Program, Mentors, Adult Education
Charter Lake Hospital, and the Educational Opportunity Center
C&S Bank, Family and Childrens' Services, and Court Services

9. *Headstart*

The Elberta Center houses 80 three-year-old Headstart at-risk students in its building. The Houston County School System feels it needs to be involved with these children; now, in addition to housing, the system provides staff development for the Headstart teachers and encourages adult education for parents.

10. *Supervision*

One minute to class and no breaks. Students are monitored at all times. This is not an overly strict atmosphere. Students are allowed to interact between classes.

11. *Smaller Teacher/Student Ratio*

The average high school class is one teacher per 15-18 students.

12. *High School/Middle School Concept*

Elberta Center houses grades 7-12. The seventh and eighth grades are taught using the interdisciplinary team concept. This team is composed of four teachers. They are also physically separated from the high school students for most of the day. The high school (grades 9-12) consists of mixed schedules where students are allowed more flexibility in the courses they take.

13. *Personal Development*

Elberta Center has a Personal Development class which is required for every seventh- and eighth-grader as part of his/her exploratory courses. Personal Development is also taught on the high school level as an elective. This course stresses conflict resolution, drug and alcohol abuse, study skills, family life, and career opportunities. Many outside resource agencies are used in this program.

14. *Cooperative Learning*

Cooperative learning is stressed at the Elberta Center. Students here are not put in a situation where they are in competition for grades, but work cooperatively to achieve the most they can academically. Teachers use varied methods in the classroom to achieve this, such as peer tutoring, coaching, and teamwork games.

15. *Focus on Reading*

The focus on literacy is a prime concern for the Elberta Center Staff. The faculty has incorporated into its homeroom period a time where at least 10 minutes must be taken in reading. This reading may be from the students textbooks, homework, or from materials provided by the teacher for pleasure reading.

16. *Coordination With Outside Agencies*

The Elberta Center uses resources from outside community agencies to supplement and enrich its present curriculum. Speakers, presentations, and materials are often supplied to Elberta students from such agencies as: Peachbelt Mental Health Agency, Department of Family and Children's Services, D.A.R.E., etc. This is done through our interagency concept. We are all dealing with the same students. We must pool our resources.

17. *Adopt-A-School*

The Citizens and Southern Bank of Warner Robins is the Elberta Center's Partner in Education. The bank provides the school with tangible support such as physical education equipment as well as speakers on topics such as how to apply for loans, banking, and balancing your checkbook. They also treat staff to breakfasts and luncheons throughout the year.

18. *Faculty Objectives*

The faculty has several objectives for the school. Some include: to enable students to be able to function in a democratic society, to foster the development of trust, to develop a positive identity, and to foster academic achievement.

19. *Flexibility*

Because of the low teacher/student ratio, Elberta Center is able to be more flexible than the traditional school. More time can be spent on certain concepts and more individual needs of the learners can be addressed. This flexibility also provides for a family type atmosphere of caring between the staff and its students. This feature certainly allows the Elberta Center to be unique.

20. *Three Homeroom Periods*

Elberta Center students have homeroom at the beginning and end of each day. The homeroom teacher is also their fourth period teacher. This structure provides an opportunity for the students to be with their homeroom teacher three times per day. The focus of this strategy is for the homeroom teacher to serve as a counselor or mentor to his/her homeroom students. It is a time for advisement, help with academics, tutoring, or personal development. This contact allows teachers to get to know students personally, to better understand them, and be able to help them in the varied problems they may be having.

21. *Student Support Team*

The student support team was established to identify students who needed additional help and guidance in the classroom setting. It also serves as a vehicle to test students who may be in need of special education services. Each teacher serves on one of the three school teams. Each teacher is assigned approximately 3-4 students that they personally contact to know how they are doing in school. They talk with them about their problems and provide strategies to help them. There are monthly SST meetings where progress is continuously discussed and documented.

22. *Parent Contact/Progress Reports*

One of the most important aspects in the success of the Elberta Center is its parent contacts. Frequent parent contact strengthens the school's ability to deal with its at-risk population. The administration and teachers feel that early identification and intervention into potential problems increase the success of its students. Methods of contact include frequent telephone calls, letters, and parent conferences. Progress reports are also an effective way to let parents know how their child is doing. Progress reports are sent home every three weeks. This keeps parents well informed as to their child's performance both academically and behaviorally.

23. *Counseling and Testing Programs*

Elberta Center provides its students with the same standardized testing as in the traditional schools. Students are provided with the Georgia Basic Skills Test, TAO, ITBS and CRT. Results of each are provided to the child, parent, and teacher, as well as to the home school. Teachers use these test results to better provide for the individual needs of his/her students. An example of the Elberta Center's effectiveness can be measured in the percentage of students at the school who passed the Georgia Basic Skills Test during the fall administration. The results were reading-90 percent, math-100 percent, and writing-88 percent.

24. *Guidance and Counseling*

The Elberta Center has one full-time guidance counselor employed by the school system. In addition, a drug counselor is provided through the Student Assistance Program. However, it should be noted that each teacher and staff member is a counselor who works closely with students not only with academic matters, but also with personal and social problems as well. Counseling is also supplemented by other outside agencies.

25. *Adult Education*

The school system provides alternative education opportunities through night high school classes and GED classes. The Elberta Center works with these students in evaluating records, scheduling appropriate classes, and exploring options.

26. *Teen Parenting*

The teen parenting program at Elberta is the only program of this type in this area. The counselor works with the parenting instructor to assure that these young mothers are given every opportunity to obtain skills and knowledge necessary to be productive citizens. Elberta provides a day care center in which parenting students care for their children and "learn by doing." Provisions are made for these students to continue their regular educational programs.

27. *Student Assistance Program*

The Student Assistance Program aids students in learning new skills that will be useful to them, both now and in adulthood. SAP will assist them in learning and using problem solv-ing skills, becoming better decision-makers, and learning to communicate with others more effectively about issues that concern adolescents. SAP provides an on-site counselor who evaluates and recommends treatment, if needed, beyond the school setting. The Elberta counselor oversees this program and coordinates efforts among parents, students, and treatment providers.

28. *Juvenile Court*

Because many students are on probation within the legal system, Elberta works closely with probation officers, social counselors, and other juvenile authorities. The counselor coordinates these efforts. Through meeting with Judge Herb Wells, a Houston County Juvenile Court Judge, all juveniles who come before him are mandated to family counseling. It is the administration's philosophy that this will provide a greater opportunity to help dysfunctional families become more functional and thus enhance the success rate of the students involved.

29. *Substance Abuse Coordinating Committee*

The Elberta counselor is a member of a newly-developed county committee designed to combine the efforts of community resources to fight drug abuse and mental health problems. Other agencies involved include Peachbelt Mental Health Center, Houston County Drug Action Center, Juvenile Treatment Center, and the Juvenile Court Office. The SAC coordinates efforts within the community and school system to assure that all areas are covered, but services do not overlap.

30. *Social Agencies*

Many Elberta students are from families, which are eligible for social services. Elberta's staff makes these referrals when necessary to the Department of Family and Children's Services, and follows up as needed to assure the student's well being.

31. *Educational Advisement*

Each semester the guidance department arranges for individual advisement concerning course requirements. Each student is dealt with on a one-to-one basis and informed of courses completed and courses required for progressing to graduation. In this way students are always aware of where they stand and can make informed decisions about where they are going.

32. *Attendance*

Absenteeism is often a problem among high-risk students. Elberta makes every effort to contact each absent student each day. The counselor works with these students individually and in small groups to explore reasons for absences and to encourage attendance.

33. *Counseling Older Students*

Occasionally Elberta has a student who simply gets too old to remain in regular school. This student feels out of place, is discouraged, and wants to get out at whatever cost. The counselor maintains files on alternative opportunities and provides advice, answers questions, provides referrals, and helps make connections to various sources. These may include Job Corp, vocational training, military enlistment, or GED night classes. This service is also available to students who are expelled from the Houston County School system. We believe it is our responsibility to provide these students with some options which would enable them to become contributing members of our community.

34. *Parent Conferences*

Conferences with parents are arranged by the counselor when deemed necessary by teachers, administrators, or by the parents themselves. Parents may request conferences at any time by calling the counselor or administrators. Progress reports are sent home to parents each three weeks so they can keep abreast of their child's progress. There is also an area on the progress report where the parent can request a conference.

35. *Homeroom Counseling*

Two homeroom periods are scheduled at Elberta. This is so homeroom teachers will have ample opportunity to know their students well on an individual basis. Students learn that their homeroom teacher is a readily available ear for whatever problems or questions they may have. This time is also used for help in homework.

36. *Mentor Program*

The mentor program is designed to provide positive adult companionship to those students who need positive attention outside the school setting. Adults from the business community volunteer and are trained before being matched with an appropriate student. The counselor at Elberta Center interviews and selects students for this program as mentors become available.

37. *Caring Staff*

Absolutely, the most important ingredient in an effective dropout prevention program such as the Elberta Center is a caring staff that is genuinely concerned about the future of its students. The selection of teachers for this school is an important task. Most of the staff are veteran teachers who exhibit not only strong teaching and classroom management skills but show a great concern about the future of its youth. They are fair and firm, yet caring.

38. *Lesson Plans*

Each teacher is assigned a lesson plan pal at the beginning of school. The pal is from the same discipline. Each week they check each others' plans and provide feedback to each other in areas such as: performance objectives, effective and varied teaching strategies, and methods of evaluation. Each teacher also makes sure that their plans are keyed to the Quality Core Curriculum. The Instructional Coordinator then periodically checks all lesson plans and provides written feedback to each teacher.

39. *Teacher/Teacher Observation*

An opportunity is given at least once per semester for each teacher to visit another teacher for one class period. This observation is informal and is purely for staff development. The visiting teacher provides the other teacher with written responses as to what effective teaching measures they observed and some ideas they might like to incorporate into their own classroom. This is a positive experience and no negative comments are allowed.

40. *Advisement*

Advisement is held two times per year prior to registration of the next semester. Each homeroom teacher is provided a grade history for each of his/her students. Using this information along with a checklist, the teacher can determine what courses are needed for graduation. The teacher discusses with each student where they are in reference to graduation, and a plan is established.

41. *Computers*

Elberta Center is equipped with a computer lab of 14 computers as well as at least one computer in each classroom. The use of the computer as a supplement to classroom instruction has been a great success. Experts say that the computer is ideal for working with at-risk students as they provide a non-judgmental, multi-sensory approach to learning. Lessons can be tailored to the individual, and they give a sense of power and control. Computers also provide privacy for those who may be embarrassed by their lack of skills. The computer has been a great success at the Elberta Center.

42. *Graduates*

Few students stay at the Elberta Center until they graduate. Most are returned to their home school before that time. Elberta usually graduates approximately five students per semester. These students receive their diploma from their home school and go through the graduation ceremony with that school. However, the number of graduates from this facility is increasing.

43. *Maintaining Academic Consistency*

The Elberta Center is able to maintain academic consistency with the local middle schools and high schools. The core curriculum is offered; however, few electives can be offered due to teaching slots. Students seem to do better at the Elberta Center than at their home school. We believe this is due to the very structured atmosphere and caring, consistent instructors. We have the philosophy that these students can succeed. We do our very best to instill that belief in them. Subjects are not easier, but our teachers help students know they can achieve.

Students are not allowed to simply sit in class and give up. They are counseled, warned, and then, if they refuse to cooperate, they are sent home. Refusal to work, refusal to try is a serious offense. Students may be required to stay after school if they are not completing their work or need help. Teachers make every effort to work with students on a one-to-one basis. Teacher-pupil ratio is low and this helps in meeting each individual's specific needs.

The students are seen by their homeroom teacher three times a day. This teacher helps and works with each student daily. Advisement information is consolidated in the office and completed advisement material is given to teachers. They don't have to spend time figuring out information, they get to spend quality time discussing courses needed, the student's future, and problems. Three-week progress reports are issued and are signed by parents. At mid-term, all parents whose children are failing more than two courses are called. Conferences are held often. Parental support is solicited and is very high at the Elberta Center. We make sure parents understand that we think "there is hope" because often they have already given up.

Teachers make every effort to give students opportunities to pass. More tests are given. All work is checked and graded and homework is not busy work. Time and help are given to aid students before a test. Teachers seek positive and creative ways to help students learn. Students are encouraged to seek help and teachers encourage them to come in early or stay late. Our staff seeks to improve the low self-concept many of our students have.

44. *C.V.A.E.*

Coordinated Vocational Academic Education (CVAE) is a state-sponsored program designed to help disadvantaged youth attain success through regular vocational and academic classes. The program is designed to teach a range of life skills from self-esteem to job acquisition and community leadership. It is hoped that the product will be a student who is more likely to succeed in the world of work.

At the Elberta Center, this program is extended to include a cooperative work experience which is available to deserving students. Students who meet strict criteria are eligible to be released from school early to report to their respective work station. This program has fostered a spirit of cooperation between the school, the student, the business community, and parents. Students learn to equate their success on the job with skills taught at school. The value of regu-lar attendance, promptness, courteousness, and hard work is apparent to students as they combine success on the job with success in all other areas of their lives. This success encourages students top complete their high school education.

45. *The Vocational Opportunities Clubs of America*

(VOCA) is the student organization for CVAE classes in Georgia. Its purpose is to promote leadership skills in students by encouraging community involvement and support. The Elberta Center VOCA Club has participated in various events in our local community. Club members rang the bells at Salvation Army kettles last Christmas and plan to do so again this year. They sponsored a float in the 1989 Christmas Parade, gave a Thanksgiving teacher appreciation breakfast, did officer training, conducted a canned-good drive, and visited local nursing homes.

46. *Evening High School*

Through evening high school, the Houston County Board of Education is offering another alternative program for students who drop out of the regular high school. This alternative is offered at the Elberta Center, Warner Robins. This program will offer a regular high school diploma, issued by the Houston County Board of Education. The program is particularly suited for students who have earned 15 or more credits toward high school graduation, but, for whatever reason, have dropped out of school before earning their diploma.

Youth Leadership: Heirs To Our Future

Douglas Gatchell

To live happy and contributing lives in our society, youth need to be able to help themselves (and often others) to identify and then achieve their goals. The skills needed to take responsibility for personal action and to work with other people in achieving goals are embodied in what we call *leadership skills.*

How do they develop their leadership skills? They learn them by observing and listening to others and by experimenting and practicing *leadership behaviors.* Leadership behaviors are the actions used by leaders. Learning experiences can be designed to provide them with opportunities to observe and practice leadership behaviors. At first they can be taught to concentrate on performing these actions in specific situations. Later, as the young people become comfortable with these behaviors, they will become natural to them and part of the leadership skills they will use throughout their lives.

It is very difficult for anyone to develop leadership skills unless he or she has a chance to try the behaviors needed for leadership first. Youth, especially, have few opportunities for experiences in formal group leadership.

Young people need to learn about themselves and others first. Then they need to develop the skills for working individually with other people. When they have mastered personal and interpersonal skills, then they can expand to the more advanced skills of working with and finally giving guidance to groups of people.

What youth believes and will believe about leadership is critical to personal success. Their opportunities in leadership roles will be relative to their own skill levels. How they maximize the use of these skills is then the key.

Leadership skills are needed by everyone. We need leadership skills to lead ourselves as well as to lead other people. We need leadership skills as much to be an effective member of a group as to direct the activity of the group. No one is a formal leader at all times.

Leadership can be learned through experience and practice just like other skills. It is not only behaviors or qualities we have, but also what to do with what we know that will determine success.

Leadership is a relationship between people. It is the way we interact with others and our sensitivity to what others need. The skills a leader has are only important when they are used well with people. We can learn leadership skills best by practicing leadership behaviors with other people.

Appropriate leadership is determined by the situation. Different people lead at different times. The combination of the leader, the group, and the goals of the group determine what style of leadership we should use. The group members must work with the leader to achieve desired results.

There are several types of skills youth need to be aware of and to develop in order to enhance their leadership potential.

- Understanding Self - understanding and developing a positive attitude about who you are, what you like and do not like, and what you want to be, understanding attitudes, techniques and methods that help learning take place and how you can be a positive force in increasing your own and others' learning.
- Communication — effective two-way sharing of information through writing, listening, speaking, and body language.
- Getting Along and Working With Others — developing an understanding of how you relate to other people you meet and how you accept and appreciate the difference between others and yourself; learning how groups work together and how to help groups accomplish their goals.
- Making Decisions and Setting Goals — learning processes and approaches to setting goals, solving problems and taking individual or group action; choosing and using resources available to getting things done.

Today's youth will and should become more actively involved citizens in their communities if they build into this leadership skill enhancement process more on learning how public policy works and how they can play a role.

As Abraham Herchell said about the past and the future: "An authentic individual is neither an end or a beginning, but a link between ages — both memory and expectation. Every moment is a new beginning within the continuance of history. It is fallacious to ever separate a moment and not sense its involvement in both the past and the future. Humbly the past defers to the future but refuses to be discarded. Only he who is an heir is qualified to be a pioneer."

Could it be then, that our youth become heirs to being leaders and involved citizens in our nation, our state and their local communities? — ABSOLUTELY, if we give them the learning opportunities.

A notebook designed specifically to be the leader's guide to a variety of options with regard to a sequential youth leadership program has been developed. Each class in this program is designed to stand on its own or to be a part of a combination of classes. Any number from one to six classes can be used individually or collectively. Also, each class's curriculum is put together for a time frame of approximately 1 to 1-1/2 hours. Naturally, to be more effective, more time could be allotted. Additional teaching resource materials and topic-related exercises have been added to each class section to encourage a broadening of instructional time for more comprehensive sessions. This added material is also available for substitution into the suggested basic curriculum plan. You may feel more comfortable with the concepts in some of the other printed material and may like other exercise/group activities better in reaching your teaching goals. Feel free to swap to fit your teaching style or that of your local instructors. All material is also there to be reproduced and used in instructors' packets, participants' notebooks, etc. If used, these products will be created and put together locally.

Certainly the suggestion is not to teach the material word for word, but to interject your own personal style and interpretation, adjustments for local instructors, and the special needs of your youth. The key is to cover the general content of the lesson for continuity and class component relationships.

Cultural Specifics and the At-Risk Youngsters: How Differences Affect Achievement

Ruth C. Chapman

Overview: Identifying the At-Risk

The term at-risk has, in recent years, become a hot topic among educators throughout the nation. With youngsters entering, as well as exiting, their schooling years in a state of at-riskness, this is a topic well worth examining. Because of the factors contributing to at-riskness, it is likely that many youngsters who are labeled at risk, without effective intervention, will proceed through school void of skills necessary for success. Some of the 14 factors determined by the Ohio State Department of Education which place a student at risk are alcohol/drug abuse, cyclical poverty, delinquency/truancy, family abuse/neglect, family structure/pregnancy, and health conditions. These factors are primarily influenced by the youngster's socioeconomic orientation. Other factors placing a youngster at risk are inadequate reading skills, inappropriate instruction, inappropriate school curriculum and inappropriate school placement. These factors pertain to the educational orientation. The two remaining factors are limited English/no-English speaking and low self-esteem. Both of these factors greatly adversely influence the child continually unless addressed.

How Cultural Diversity Affects Achievement

While America is well known as "the melting pot" in which many cultures have meshed, each culture possesses its own uniqueness. Because of the diversities of cultures, it is important that the facilitating and limiting attitudes and abilities supported by each culture be recognized. According to Barbara Clark, as reported in *Growing up Gifted: Developing the Potential of Children at Home and at School*, there are clearly established differences among subcultures or ethnic groups. In examining the culturally diverse backgrounds of African-American, Hispanic and Asian students, there are strengths which, when utilized, could greatly affect the achievement of minority students. Of the many abilities brought to the learning situation by each group, a few differences are that many African-American students tend to enjoy self-sufficiency and independent action while many Hispanic students tend to enjoy cooperative learning experiences and planning strategies. Many Asian students enjoy disciplined guidance activities, and a seriousness about their own development. With these and many other differences examined, a greater emphasis could be placed on providing the "style" of instruction that may best affect the achievement of minority students and thus help them to be less at risk.

Preventing and Reducing Strategies

After looking at the contributing factors of at-risk students, and, after examining some of the cultural differences that affect specific populations, the next natural step is to determine what to do to address these issues. There are probably as many specific approaches as there are individuals to be approached. However, there are some general strategies that may offer a starting place.

First, there is the Total Being Approach. Every youngster, regardless of his socio-economic environment, educational orientation, or cultural background is first and foremost a total human being. Therefore, if attempts are made to nourish him or her mentally, emotionally, socially, physically, and spiritually, she becomes more "wholly" healthy and eventually becomes more capable of becoming less at risk. Every youngster deserves and needs to have an opportunity for balance. A balanced life is one in which every aspect of one's life is continually being taken care of, but not necessarily to the same extent. Because of individual differences, every youngster is not going to want nor need the exact same formula as another youngster in order to feel balanced and fulfilled. It is necessary to have some of each component, but not necessarily equal amounts of each component.

Providing balance in life can be compared to a balanced diet. While it is important that one's diet include foods from all of the major food groups in order to maintain health, some people may prefer more of one food group while desiring less of another group. Some people lean heavily toward a meat and potato diet with a sprinkling of vegetables, while others enjoy huge salads with a small piece of broiled meat and a half slice of wheat bread. It would be ludicrous and quite a struggle to try to force the same portions of each food group upon each individual. The important thing is to provide balanced meals that offer some variety.

Because people are constantly in a state of change, they require different things at different times. So it is with a well-balanced youngster. He needs a daily intake of mental, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual building. Depending on the needs of the individual, on some days one might need more intense mental, spiritual, and emotional nourishment with a little social and physical strengthening. Yet, on another day, one may need larger portions of the physical and social ingredients, with less need for the others. Here, too, as in one's diet, the important thing is to provide balance with variety. When looking at cultural diversity, it is important to understand that people of differing cultures may put more emphases on some aspects of development and less on others. Also, the manner in which people of a particular group interact with each other or accomplish certain tasks may differ from other groups. It is, therefore, important to take into consideration one's cultural background in understanding a youngster's approach to or his attitude about a given aspect of his life. We cannot ignore how one's culture affects one's approach to life itself and the values that varying cultures ascribe to life's activities. It is important to understand that each ethnic group forms a sub-culture with its own attitudes and behaviors. While it is important to assist youngsters in achieving balance in life, it is equally important to allow youngsters the freedom to utilize one's cultural style.

Second, there is the Cultural Inclusion Approach. In this approach, a youngster from a culturally diverse background sees the accomplishments of "his" culture as being equally as important as the dominant culture, and thus becomes strengthened in his esteem of himself and "his people."

The ideal way to implement the cultural inclusion approach would be to completely revise the school curriculum in each district. History should include the accomplishments of all cultural groups of people during a segment of time. To look at only one group is to exclude the importance or relevancy of other groups. Literature should reflect the thoughts and feelings of all races of people. Mathematics and science should include information pertinent to and reflective of a variety of cultures. All subjects taught by all teachers in all schools in this country should reflect the fact that this country is built upon the contributions of all the people living on its soil.

Of course, we do not live in an ideal society. Therefore, we must incorporate realistic ways to accomplish some of the basics of the ideal plan. We have a responsibility to all students to provide a high-quality, culturally-sensitive education to our students. Because our world is rapidly changing, we must help all students to be able to function effectively and successfully.

It is predicted that by the year 2000, one-third of all students will be of a minority group. With these changing demographics, it becomes increasingly important to include the thoughts, contributions, and experiences of minority groups into the general educational process. There must be a consciousness by all races of people that we live in a culturally rich and diverse society.

Cultural inclusion helps youngsters to maintain one's positive cultural identity in a diverse world. It helps all youngsters to develop an understanding and appreciation of his own as well as others' cultures. The purpose of cultural inclusion is to erase the idea of superiority of any given race of people and to boast the idea of beauty and strength within every culture.

Last, the Parent/Community Involvement Approach aids in making a commitment to achievement a joint venture and, thereby, provides the strength and impetus necessary on an ongoing basis. Value is accrued, and youngsters become less at risk.

Because youngsters are greatly influenced by their homes and their communities, it is becoming increasingly important that parents and communities take ownership of the responsibility to bring about positive change. Although schools and social service agencies may be able to make some impact in the lives of youngsters, a greater and longer lasting impact could be made through positive reinforcement at the "root" of that youngster, which is his home or his neighborhood.

By using this approach, the community is conveying to the youngster "you are important to me; we are important to each other; we are important people." Because schools and social agencies have not been fully successful in addressing the needs of multi-cultural youngsters, our communities must come forth in designing programs, reinforcing cultural identity, and providing positive cultural esteem among our youngsters. We must demonstrate through example the idea of cherishing who we are and appreciating the differences of others.

Our children belong to each of us individually and collectively. We must become responsible for helping our youngsters to move out of the confines of "youngsters at risk" to the arena of "youngsters of excellence." It is a task that will require effort, commitment, perseverance, and strength. We must help our youngsters to achieve by making a personal commitment to address each of the risk-producing factors in each youngster in which it appears. Culturally diverse youngsters can achieve and will achieve with the help of those who have already paved the way.

The After-School Tutorial Program of ECMS: Helping At-Risk [illegible] Academically and Personally

[illegible]

Elbert County Middle School has implemented a program that directly impacts at-risk students in a positive manner. The After School Tutorial Program (ASTP) targets pupils in danger of being retained and who have no home support to help them academically, two characteristics of an at-risk student. Additionally, ASTP is designed to aid in developing testing skills, study skills, organizational skills, and the building of self-esteem. Four factors, organization, implementation, funding and counseling, serve as the basis of this program.

In organizing the After School Tutorial Program it is essential that the teachers of each team come together and discuss possible candidates for admission. Each team recommends a number of students who may qualify as "targets." The team then prioritizes the list beginning with the most needy. After each team submits its candidates, permission forms are sent home to parents. This form notifies parents that the student is in danger of failing but is being given the opportunity to get help. Once the parent signs the form, it is returned, and the program coordinator places the child with a tutor. Teachers, one from each subject area, are selected on the basis of their willingness to serve in the program and their ability to work closely with individual students. Students are placed with the teacher from the subject area in which they are in most need of help. That subject is given primary emphasis; however, help is given in all academic areas as necessary.

The tutorial meets twice a week for 1 and 1/2 hours per day. Participants have the option of discontinuing the services if sufficient progress is made. If a student leaves the program, he or she may return if progress falls short again. The ASTP tutors monitor pupil progress and communicate frequently with regular classroom teachers to remain abreast of the changing needs of the student.

Bus drivers are selected through the transportation department, and each driver is given a particular section of the county to cover. Offering transportation at no cost is the most unique aspect about our program at ECMS. Many students would not be able to stay since they would have no way home. This aspect alone has been a key factor to the success of our program.

There are several different approaches teachers may use in the ASTP classroom. However, it is not just an extension of the classroom in which information is given and the student has homework or testing responsibilities, but rather a place where students can receive help with what is being taught in the regular classroom. This may include homework, studying for a test, working on a report, or doing an assignment which the classroom teacher has sent for the student to develop a particular skill.

Many of our teachers work on improving self-esteem. Tutors encourage and praise individual students, as well as work on building self-confidence with the whole group.

The tutorial approach also develops skills enabling students to work individually, since ASTP teachers will often have different grade levels, subject matter, or concepts at any given time. Because of this fact, teacher ratio averages 1 to 14.

The guidance department offers counseling to the students in the ASTP on an individual and group basis. Guidance is also instrumental in identifying candidates for the program since teachers submit copies of progress reports to the counselors. Additionally, one of the more exciting new developments of our program has been the workshop presented by the counselors for the parents of ASTP students. This workshop, entitled PLACES (Parents Learning to Assist Children to Excel in School), is designed to give parents a chance to gain insight on how to help their children make progress in school, even though they might not feel they have the academic skills to do so. The guidance department also provides homework journals, at no cost, to the student.

Funding for the program was acquired through several different sources. Grants are offered throughout the state department in various areas where ASTP qualifies. These include working with at-risk students, helping students improving self-esteem, helping students in low-socioeconomic groups, Chapter 2 Special Grant Projects, Equal Education Opportunity Program, as well as others.

The cost of such a program varies. Teachers are paid their hourly wage, and bus drivers are paid a fixed amount based on county guides. A "two teacher/two bus driver" program costs approximately $5,000 for a given year and a "four teacher/three bus driver" program is approximately $10,000 a given year.

It is an option for the county to "pick up" the cost that special funding and/or grants do not cover. It is well worth the cost.

The ASTP has been successful for Elbert County Middle School for three years. Major factors for this success have been the ability to offer transportation to the student's home and the ability to offer this program at no cost to the student. During our first year of implementation, 3 out of 33 students were retained after participating. After the second year of implementation, 6 out of 37 students were retained. In this third year we have increased our staff to serve about 60 students. We are consistently getting referrals from teachers and counselors, as well as from parents and students themselves to be considered for our program.

The After School Tutorial Program at Elbert County Middle School is directly impacting our students who are at risk. We are offering help and support at no cost or inconvenience to the family. Students are getting the assistance they need where otherwise there would be none.

Project Impact: A Model College-School Collaborative For High Risk Inner-City Youth

David Emmons

At-Risk Youth: A National View

In a recent discussion of achievement by black males, Reed (1988) underscored the significance of education as "the key that unlocks the door to social, economic, and political mobility . . . It is requisite to self-fulfillment, employability, and one's full participation in a rapidly growing informational and technological society" (p. 37). Yet, as Dougherty (1989) warns, numerous indicators point to "a sizable number of youth [who] are not successfully participating in the educational process . . . [Consequently,] the term at-risk youth is now commonplace among researchers, policy-makers, and educators" (p. 3). Indeed, we can put a face on at risk. During the next half hour, according to the American Council on Education (1990), more than 160 young people in the United States will make personal decisions that will affect them for the rest of their lives. Their families, their communities, and the entire nation will also live with the consequences. Nearly 50 will drop out of school; 85 will commit a violent crime against another human being; 27 teenage girls will give birth, 16 of them out of wedlock. And each succeeding half hour another 160 young people will repeat the same mistakes. By the end of the year, one million students will have dropped out of school; 1.3 million young people will have committed a violent crime; and 478,000 teenagers will have given birth . . . (p. 1-2)

Davis and McCaul (1990) cite the following statistics that underscore the problem.

- 1 million students drop out of school each year.
- 1.5 million teenage women become pregnant each year.
- Between one-fifth and one-fourth of all U.S. children live below the poverty line.
- On any given night it is estimated there are at least 100,000 homeless children.
- Each year, more than 5,000 youth commit suicide.
- More than 2.2 million cases of child abuse and neglect were reported in 1987.
- Fifteen percent of graduates of urban high schools read at less than the 6th grade level.
- Almost 10 million children have no regular source of medical care.
- About 20 million children under age 17 have never seen a dentist.
- An estimated 3 million children have a serious drinking problem (p. 4).

Atlantic City: The Local View

If you are an eighth-grader in Atlantic City, New Jersey, you can look east out the windows of Central Junior High and see gleaming casino hotels a block away rising along the oceanfront. You can also look west or north out of your school's windows and see a devastated city. To the east, neon, shining glass, and marble. To the west or north, gutted apartments, boarded businesses, and empty blocks where only weeds grow.

Atlantic City presents one of the most challenging environments in the country for an at-risk student. The city's crime rate exceeds that of any other New Jersey municipality and ranks among the highest for SMSA's in the country. In 1987, for example, the Atlantic City SMSA had the sixth-highest felony crime rate in the United States. It was the only northeast city among the twenty highest crime cities (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1988). The city harbors one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy and infant mortality in the state (Atlantic County, 1990). More of its land and buildings are abandoned than any major city's in the country. And no other city in America presents a starker contrast between decay and neglect on the one hand and opulence and wealth on the other. For an eighth-grader at risk, it is especially hard to find safe passage between the contradictions of this city: between the glitter and the grit, between the fantasies of abundance and the grim determination to survive, between the boardwalk and the mean streets.

The College

Twelve miles west of Atlantic City sits Richard Stockton State College. Set in 1,500 pristine acres of forest and lakes, the college serves 5,000 students on one of the most beautiful campuses in the state. The Pine Barrens, the only wilderness area on the east coast, and large bird sanctuaries lie close by.

The college and the city are separated by tidelands — salt marshes which stretch from the coastal mainland to the sand dune islands on which Atlantic City and the other shore resorts of New Jersey are located. The tidelands are a fragile but enormously productive ecosystem which supports a rich variety of plants and animals. The teeming life of the tidelands is secured by the interdependence of species. Its wealth, is based on partnership and collaboration.

Thus, the environment which physically separates the college from the city offers a model for collaboration between the two. Or, to put it differently, this same environment embodies the principle of collaboration which joined the college and the city's school system in a program to prevent juvenile delinquency.

The Program: Project IMPACT

Project IMPACT is a juvenile delinquency prevention program for young teenagers at extreme risk — eighth-grade students who pose the greatest danger of leaving school and committing crime. The typology of Slavin (1989) locates Project IMPACT as one version of a "special program:" an educational juvenile delinquency prevention initiative. Such efforts, according to Taylor-Gibbs (1989), "that involve teenagers in productive activities will presumably reduce their energies, motivation, and time for self-destruction and delinquent behavior" (p. 20).

The program's acronym — IMPACT — stands for "Interactive Mentoring and Peer Tutoring for Atlantic City Teenagers."

The program is collaboratively run by Richard Stockton State College and the Atlantic City Board of Education: a college and a public school system reaching out across the tidelands in collaboration. The program seeks to keep young people in school and off the streets by enriching their education, building their self-esteem, and strengthening their network of support. It pursues these aims in the college-setting — an educational ecosystem, if you will, with rich resources and facilities. Wilbur, Lambert, and Young (1987) suggest that "the energies of many collaboratives that focus on the educational needs of minorities and those students deemed to be 'at-risk' seem to be well warranted" (p. 39).

Project IMPACT shares some characteristics with two similarly designed, but larger programs in Washington, DC: the Junior Citizens Corps, which emphasizes remedial education, counseling, and youth leadership training; and City Lights, which focuses on educational activities. Other programs, at least partly similar to Project IMPACT, include: Louis Armstrong Middle School at Queens College and Middle College High School, both in New York; Project Second Chance in Milwaukee; the Academic Partnership programs at California State University, Northridge; the Cleveland Alternative Education Program, Cleveland, Ohio; the University of Rhode Island/Providence School Department Partnership; and the Urban Education Initiative,Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Project IMPACT takes the 30 most at-risk eighth-graders from Atlantic City and brings them twice a week to the campus of Stockton State College. The students attend afternoon classes in which they are exposed to a special curriculum which emphasizes cultural enrichment, critical thinking skills, and values education. Stockton faculty designed the curriculum and teach the classes. The eighth-graders also work with mentors who tutor them where needed and serve as role models, counselors, and friends. The mentors are Stockton students, many of whom know or come from the streets. At the end of the school year, the eighth-graders will attend a summer institute at Stockton. The institute will bring together IMPACT students, their families, mentors, and faculty for a week of capstone educational experiences, recreational and cultural events, and a graduation.

The most at-risk students were selected for the program using the following criteria:

- Excessive absenteeism and tardiness
- Disruptive behavior and other behavior problems
- Academic performance below ability level
- Poor self-image
- Lack of social skills
- Conflicts at home and/or with peers
- Low socioeconomic status

These standards conform to those cited by

Dougherty (1990) in his review of effective programs for at-risk adolescents.

Project IMPACT is unique in three respects. First, it takes the worst, most delinquent-prone students — not the best or the just at risk or the merely underachieving — and places them in the college environment. Second, it targets young students, before delinquent careers have momentum. Indeed, the project is contemplating a shift to even younger students. Third, it is the subject of a scientific evaluation. Most social policy and programs, in contrast, are not rigorously assessed.

Collaboratives

Project IMPACT offers important lessons for collaborative ventures. We will discuss two.

PRIOR PATHWAYS. Collaboratives are easier to establish if prior pathways between collaborating institutions have already been built. The pathways between our campus and the city, between the college and the school system, had already been constructed well before fall 1990 when the program began. Two examples. The director and co-designer of the program — an associate vice-president at the college — had recently accompanied the superintendent of Atlantic City schools on an enthusiastic tour of "middle college" projects at several institutions of higher learning. The "middle college" — whose concept Project IMPACT borrows and extends — brings academic underachievers in high school into the college environment for assistance. This element of collaborative leadership at top levels is of critical importance. As Trubowitz (1984) and Mocker (1988) both warn, for collaboration to be successful, top leadership from both postsecondary and secondary institutions must be involved.

The president of Stockton State College, Dr. Vera King Farris, has deep ties to Atlantic City. This remarkable woman grew up in the city in economic poverty, although she was rich in other regards. She is one of the school system's most celebrated graduates: she skipped three grades and graduated at the age of 14. She has family there. The city is her hometown. Her belief in extending the college's resources in partnership with others is unswerving. As a result, she committed the college to Project IMPACT — knowing the dangers and risks — without hesitation. At a meeting in the infancy of project planning, she made the decision to back the program in five minutes. At other colleges or universities approval could well have taken years.

CRITICAL MASS. Cuban (1989) states that, "the future of urban schools is the primary issue facing the nation's educational system. . . . If the system is left as it is, the social and individual cost of inadequate schools will severely corrode the social fabric of the nation . . . [Inner-city] students in these schools, like students everwhere, bring strengths to their classrooms and dreams of academic success" (p. 3).

Project IMPACT serves inner-city black and Puerto Rican youth who are at risk. If a college is to assist these students, it must nurture within its walls the personnel, the expertise, and the will to assist meaningfully. The institution must contain the critical mass of resources to be useful. This critical mass does not grow by accident. Usually it results from a vigorous policy of affirmative action and a strong commitment in recruitment, student life, and the curriculum to multi-cultural diversity. Stockton State College has a strong record in this regard. Almost a fifth of its students, more than 10 percent of its faculty, and some of its key administrators — including the president — are minority. The college has been a pioneer in remedial education, training for critical thinking, and the teaching of writing. In short, the college has the critical mass of resources to design and implement a Project IMPACT.

Project IMPACT's mission echoes the view of the American Association of School Administrators in *Student At Risk: Problems and Solutions* (Brodinsky and Keough, 1989):

successful at-risk programs offer an alternative curriculum, counseling, tutoring, and work-related business partnerships. Project IMPACT has received widespread recognition in New Jersey and may spawn replication at other sites. The Project IMPACT concept — although developed for the urban milieu — can be applied in a suburban or rural environment as well. This is particularly compelling as state and local policy makers continue to look for solutions to advance the status of the at-risk population (Dougherty, 1989).

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Parents: A Necessary Link

Sam Ensley, Karen McGuire, Becky Moose, and Pam Everett

Union County Middle School is a small school of 4,416 students located in the economically depressed northeast, Appalachian area of Georgia. There is one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school in the county. There is also a small isolated school at Woody Gap that has approximately 100 students. The sixth, seventh, and eighth grades are included in the middle school population.

There has traditionally been a high dropout rate in the schools, sometimes running as high as 40 percent. In an effort to stem the dropout rate, the middle school is in the process of trying several programs directed toward the at-risk students, including a special at-risk team of teachers.

The at-risk team, hereinafter referred to as the AG Team (for across-grades), consists of three regular classroom teachers, plus the Chapter I teacher. The teachers are a hand-picked group. Each teacher has some genetic base in the culture and heritage of the area. Other factors considered in the choice of teachers for the team were sense of dedication, suitable personality for the task, and related experience. (Two of the teachers have children of their own who have experienced learning disabilities.) In short, the teachers selected for the team where chosen for their abilities to deal with their particular segment of the school population of cultural as well as academic bases.

Standardized test scores and age-to-grade-level ratios are used as the criteria for student placement in the team. Those students who score below the 50th percentile in reading and/or math are eligible. Those who are at least one year behind their age group in grade assignment are also eligible. This automatically includes the Chapter I eligible students. Further screening of students is accomplished through recommendations of the school's Student Support Team.

The team is vertical in that it includes all three grades: sixth, seventh, and eighth. This allows the flexibility of moving students up and down while at the same time keeping them in the same team. All students are mainstreamed into the other groups for exploratory, health, physical education, and some academic classes other that the core subjects. Some students are gradually phased out of the team into other groups.

Community/Parental Involvement

One of the first realizations was that major efforts would have to be made to get the parents of the teams' students involved in the education of their children. This is where the careful selection of the team members paid off. The members were familiar with the community and were able to communicate better with the parents. Some of the strategies used by all team members are:

- personal invitations to open house at the school
- in-home visitations
- sharing family crises
- regular written communication with par ents
- open home telephone policy
- scheduled personal conferences at parents' convenience

The school has an after-school tutorial program initiated by the AG Team that involves community volunteers as well as teachers. Need for involvement in the program is determined by CRT scores of the students. Before a student becomes involved with the program, the need is discussed with the parents so that they know exactly what the program involves and the specific weaknesses of each student. There is no cost to the parents for this program and transportation is furnished by the teachers for the student, if needed.

An experimental tutoring program is currently underway by the AG Team that involves the parents in the tutoring process. A survey of parents indicated that a sizable enough percentage of them wanted to participate in a parental tutorial workshop. The school administration is enthusiastically backing this experiment which is being done by one of the AG Team members as a research project in an Ed.S. program at the University of Georgia.

Second Southeastern

Conference on

YOUTH AT RISK

Conference Program

February 14-16, 1991

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SECOND SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE ON YOUTH AT RISK

Official Conference Program

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1991

6:30 - 7:30 pm Pre-Conference Sessions/Workshops

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
1.1	H. R. Cheshire	"Georgia's Project Success Programs: Interlocking Academics and Vocational Education." **(Hyatt Verelst Room).** A team of teachers combining academic and vocational education, focusing on self-esteem, motivation, success, job training — to stay in school and graduate.
1.2	Robert A. Martin Karen Bowen Myrel Seigler Janette Williams	"Ninth Grade: The At-Risk Years." **(Hyatt, Percival Room).** Implications from Austin, Texas and Georgia Studies suggest a range of interventions with students, teachers, and parents at ninth-grade level.
1.3	Elizabeth Gaines-Mitchell Shirley Charlton	"Reducing the Risk for At-Risk Students." **(Hyatt, Vernon Room).** One urban school system is reducing the risk through staff development, extended contracts, and participation in outside consortiums.
1.4	Evelyn B. Dandy	"Rappin', Woofin', and Playing in the Dozens: Breaking the Cycle of Miscommunication." **(Hyatt, Sloane Room).** A 2-hour workshop providing strategies that improve communication between teachers and at-risk students.
1.5	Christopher S. Chalker	"Strategies and Programs for Involving At-Risk Youth." **(Days Inn, Oglethorpe Room).** Highly successful. Operation V.I.C.T.O.R.Y. (Various Initiatives Contributing Towards Overcoming Riskness in Youth) used to affect readiness and development.
1.6	Hillery Motsinger	"Success in School via a School-Based, Community-wide Parent Involvement Program." **(Days Inn, Chatham/Habersham Room).** This presentation gives the elements of a program of involvement that is successful in N.C., Miss., and Texas.

7:45 - 8:45 pm Pre-Conference Sessions/Workshops Continued

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
1.7	Ann Miniutti	"Linguistic and Behavioral Characteristics of At-Risk Children with Communication Disorders: Current Research." **(Days Inn, Kennedy Room, Suite Bldg.).** Research results which compare language skills of L.D. students and B.D. students with average achieving students on the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-Revised (CELF-R).
1.9	Linda Hylar Jim Malanowski	"Cities in Schools: Reconnecting the Disconnected through Communication, Collaboration, Cooperation, and Celebration." **(Hyatt, Percival Room).** This workshop focuses on partnerships between cities, schools, and other agencies that help those who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out.
1.11	Marie Ann Polite	"Verbal Intervention with African-American Students." **(Days Inn, Chatham/Habersham Room).** This session features a discussion of the negative verbal behaviors of students and appropriate responses by experienced educators.
1.12	Joseph Stevenson David Emmons	"Project IMPACT." **(Days Inn, Oglethorpe Room).** Project IMPACT is a new innovative school-college-university collaborative program aimed at juvenile delinquency prevention of at-risk teenagers in Atlantic City.
1.13	John H. McRae	"When a Fellow Student Dies: How do you handle it?" **(Days Inn, Kennedy Room, Suite Bldg.).** The concept of at-risk students takes on a whole new meaning when death happens on campus.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1991

9:00 - 9:45 am First General Session Speaker: Ms. Dee Dee Sharpe (Educator and Consultant on Youth At Risk), Presentation Title: "Image and the At-Risk Learner." **(Grand Ballroom, Hyatt Regency)**. Chair: Otis Johnson.

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2.1	Mary L. Carroll Nancy A. Veerman	"Let Them Speak...Let Us Listen...Let Us Change." **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** Features a video that offers insights for faculty, counselors, mentors, and staff working directly with high-risk learners in a successful alternative high school.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
2.2	Gary Reglin Sharon Harris	"Effectively Addressing the Needs of Middle School and High School At-Risk Black Males." **(Hyatt, Ballroom E).** Session deals with evaluative factors associated with Black males that are underachieving based on CAT Scores.
2.3	Darrel Lang	"Adolescents Are What They Think, You Think, They Are: Self-Concept and the At-Risk Student." **(Hyatt, Ballroom F).** Audience participation with focus on a 21-step approach to improving the self concept of adolescents.
2.4	Carolyn A. Rees-Potter	"The Effects of Maternal Cocaine Abuse on Children: Educational implications." **(Hyatt, Verelst Room).** Emphasis on implications for educational systems related to identified effects of maternal cocaine abuse on children.
2.7	Sue R. Mohrmann	"Learning Styles of At-Risk Students From Grade 3 Through College Age." **(Days Inn, Chatham/Habersham Room).** Using the Dunn & Dunn model, learning style characteristics of at-risk students will be presented.
2.8	Deborah Kramer	"Preventing the High-Risk Course: Integrating Skills Reinforcement in College Content Courses." **(Days Inn, Executive Board Room, Suite Bldg).** The implementation of teaching/strategies to reinforce basic skills in a college pediatric nursing course.
2.9	Larry D. Dorrell	"It's the Soul Afraid of Dying that Never Learns to Live." **(Days Inn, Kennedy Room, Suite Bldg.).** As long as many of the at-risk students can remember, their parents, peers, teachers, and society have been making it clear to them that they are failures.
2.10	Patrice Gilliam Gist	"Counselors and At-Risk Diversity in the Public School Population." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #1, Oglethorpe Room).** This presentation identifies the needs of cross-culture minorities, particularly school students.
2.11	L. Jayne Goldstein	"The Adult Learners At-Risk." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #2, Oglethorpe Room).** One community college's ideas and strategies for dealing with the fastest growing at-risk student population today.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
2.12	Peter C. Mulvaney	"Berkshire Junior Senior High School: A Model for Adjudicated Male Youth." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #3, Oglethorpe Room).** Discussion about a school population of non-felonious, juvenile delinquents and the school's mission of instilling self-esteem and helping students find an identity.
2.13	Bill Stinson Norma Stinson	"Adolescent Communication: Solving the Puzzle." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #4, Oglethorpe Room).** A session that shares ideas for fostering better communication among teachers, parents, and adolescents.

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11:15 - 12:15 pm Group Session II General Topic: *"Preventing and Reducing Incident of At Risk"*

3.1	Elizabeth Stellas	"No More Victims, No more Victimizers." **(Hyatt, Percival Room).** Violence Prevention Education: Teaching Models on Social Skills for Risk Reduction.
3.2	Sandra J. McNeal	"A-chieve a-LL Y-our P-otential A-cademic C-apacity." **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** A child-centered planned study skills program called ALLY PAC, which uses positive reinforcement in a club setting is highlighted.
3.3	Patricia A. Cook Nancy E. O'Dell Miriam Bender	"Another Reason Why Johnny Can't Sit Still." **(Hyatt, Vernon Room).** Another reason, with circumventions and interventions, to help the wiggly child.
3.4	Kenneth R. Romines	"ESCALON: A Public/Private Model of Collaboration to Prevent and Reduce Students At-Risk." **(Hyatt, Verelst Room).** A highly successful school dropout prevention and recovery program that involves the school system, local businesses, and community agency.
3.5	Kourtland R. Koch	"Project HEARTS: Helping to Educate the At Risk Through Success." **(Hyatt, Ballroom E).** This presentation provides alternative open-entry educational programs utilizing a functional curriculum in which the interests, skills, and identified needs of each participant is related to the world-of-work, home, and the community.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
3.6	Emma Gresham Juanita Williams Jean Devard-Kemp Shelia Allen Grady Sampson Jean Bowen	“Beyond the School System: Keysville's Concerned Citizens Totally Involved Their Rural Community in a Model Approach for Reducing At Risk.” **(Hyatt, Ballroom F).** The mayor and others from a tiny rural community tell how they got moving to take charge of their own future and the special needs of at-risk youth.
3.7	Judith Beasley M. Susan Pilgrim	“The Home/School Liaison Program – Involving the At-Risk Family.” **(Days Inn, Chatham/ Habersham Room).** Learn how a “No Pull-Out” Chapter One Program can be designed to meet the needs of at-risk students through the implementation of the Home/School Liaison concept.
3.8	Donald R. Castle	“The Emergence of the Dislocated Student At Risk in the Smaller Urban School System.” **(Days Inn, Executive Board Room, Suite Bldg.).** This presentation deals wit the impact of de-industrialization and the dislocated student in school systems in urban communities.
3.9	Wanton H. Hadley Richard T. Hadley	“Motivational Strategies for At-Risk Students.” **(Days Inn, Roundtable #1, Oglethorpe Room).** Description of current “model programs“ for at-risk youth, and building their self-esteem.
3.10	Mary V. Lambert	“The Effects of School-Age Child Care on School Success of At-Risk Children.” **(Days Inn, Kennedy Room, Suite Bldg.).** A student survey conducted to determine the effects of school age child care on the school success of at-risk children in an inner city school.
3.11	Mark Schelske Lawrence Zimmerman Jeffry Burk	“Alternative School: Successful Programs for Severely Disaffected Dropout, and Delinquent Youth.” **(Days Inn, Roundtable #3, Oglethorpe Room).** Session discusses strategies used to address the needs of students who are truant, educationally disadvantaged, or delinquent.
3.12	Kathryn A. Newman	“Social Interaction Patterns of Normally Achieving and Academically At-Risk Young Children During Unstructured Periods.” **(Days Inn, Roundtable #2, Oglethorpe Room).** Information on social interaction patterns of low-income families will be presented.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
3.13	Jim Storm	"An Alternative Service Delivery System for High School Dropouts." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #4, Oglethorpe Room).** Discussion of the key steps for private organizations such as the "Minneapolis Five" to begin working with at-risk and dropout youth.
3.14	Linda W. Slaughter	"Effective Intervention Strategies for At-Risk Youth: Creating a Climate for Success." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #5, Oglethorpe Room).** This presentation reviews the most effective practices of hundreds of intervention programs and suggests strategies which can be implemented by the district, the school, and the classroom teacher.
12:15 - 1:45 pm	LUNCH	Lunch in Hyatt Ballroom Sponsored by the Savannah Chamber of Commerce and Savannah Compact). Speaker: Mr. Walter Sessoms, Senior Vice President of Southern Bell. Presentation Title: "Youth At Risk, A Businessman's Perspective"

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1:45 - 2:40 pm	Group Session III	General Topic: *"Parent and Community Involvement"*
4.1	Geoffry Cohl	"City-As-School: Community as Classroom." **(Hyatt, Vernon Room).** Focus is on off-site learning experiences where secondary students, including students with limited English proficiency, can be successful.
4.2	Robert R. Nolan JoAnn Vander Molen	"Sell Your Program! Public Relations for At-Risk Student Programs." **(Hyatt, Ballroom E).** This session will help school administrators in establishing proven, aggressive public relations activities for at-risk programs.
4.3	Merrill M. Oaks Michael Nixon Jane Rosenberg	"School-Based Interprofessional Case Management: A Collaborative Interagency Program That Works." **(Hyatt, Ballroom F).** Interprofessional Case Management (ICM) is a series of interactions within a network of schools, health and social agencies designed to coordinate support for at-risk students and families.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
4.4 & 5.4	Gerald A. Klein Marilyn Beck Kathy Young Fred Stallings Andrea Green Genelda McClain	"Georgia Innovation Program Projects Address the Problems of At-Risk Students K-12." (2-hour session **(Hyatt, Percival Room).** The scope of these developmental projects addresses the following at-risk areas; increased parental involvement in a preschool child's education, middle school at-risk students tutoring third- and fourth-grade students in reading and math during summer school and the regular school year, and alternative school within a school with double periods of block scheduling for academic subjects and a daily group guidance class.
4.5	Rick Jay Short Mark E. Meadows John C. Moracco	"Issues in School-Based Service Delivery for At-Risk Youth." **(Hyatt, Verelst Room).** Rural schools' lack of resources and lack of coordination and communication with other agencies have created new collaborations.
4.6	Rosalyn J. McDonald	"Potential Graduate Society: A Mentorship Program with the Chamber of Commerce." **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** Fifty students involved in a mentoring program which leads to better self-concept and direction on the part of the students.
4.7	Jerry Trusty Katherine Dooley-Dickey	"Training Peer Helpers for Helping At-Risk Students." **(Days Inn, Chatham.Habersham Room).** This program will be a description of a training model designed to prepare peer helpers for work with at-risk students.
4.8	Barbara Miller Marilyn Brown	"Intergenerational Volunteer Programs with At-Risk Youth: A Mutually Beneficially Partnership." **(Days Inn, Executive Board Room, Suite Bldg.).** Session looks on how to set-up an intergenerational volunteer program with at-risk students as volunteers along with older generations.
4.9	Peter Ladd Kyle Blanchfield	"Family/School Partnerships in Resolving Conflict with At-Risk Youth." **(Days Inn, Kennedy Room, Suite Bldg.)** Family/school partnerships in resolving conflict with at risk.
4.10	Tom Keating Debbie Weir	"Project Safe Slide: A Chattanooga County, Georgia, Summer Dropout Prevention, Family Support Project." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #1, Oglethorpe Room).** Project Safe Slide is a summer dropout prevention, family support project geared toward working with parents of at-risk third through sixth-graders.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
4.11	Brad Zervas	"Community Scholars: A Public and Private Trust." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #3, Oglethorpe Room).** Private and public school educators, community leaders, and private industry work together to empower students with the vision to challenge the traditional view of their academic and social profile.
4.12	Barney J. Brawer	"Applying Family Therapy to the School Setting: A System Approach to Understanding and Solving Behavior Problems." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #2, Oglethorpe Room).** Deals with essential therapy and provides application examples.
4.13	Janet S. Glover	"Parent/Community Involvement of Classroom Teachers." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #4, Oglethorpe Room).** There are many creative activities which may be instigated by classroom teachers and that will benefit at-risk students with both parent and community involvement.
4.14	Caron A. Westland	"Parental Involvement in Secondary Schools." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #5, Oglethorpe Room).** Discussion of rural schools parental involvement along with relationship to school environment are highlighted.

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3:00 - 3:55 pm Group Session IV General Topic: "*Reforming and Changing Delivery Systems*"

5.1	Betty S. Griffin	"The Kentucky Reform Act: Its Impact on Reforming and Changing the Educational Delivery Systems for the At-Risk Student Population." **(Hyatt, Verelst Room).** This session is designed to provide information and implementation models associated with the manner in which Kentucky's Reform Act of 1990, will change the delivery of educational services to those students identified as at risk.
5.2	Thomasine Hardy Mary Ellen Maxwell Nehemiah Smith Donovan Phillips	"Attacking the Problem of At-Risk Students: A Model for Boards of Education." **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** State of North Carolina School Boards Association's Black Caucus takes significant steps to attack problems of minority and at-risk students.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
5.5	Norma Tisdel Pat Hernandez	"The Mother-Daughter Program: A Model Early Intervention Program." **(Hyatt, Ballroom F).** An intervention program that uses a developmental approach over a 5-year period, 8th grade through high school.
5.6	Alta J. Cannady	"Work, Achievement and Values in Education – The WAVE: A Report on First Year Implementation in Rural, Urban, and Suburban America." **(Days Inn, Executive Board Room, Suite Bldg.).** A daring innovation in at-risk programming for academic and personal success in 52 schools across the country.
5.7	Dale J. Kadlecek	"A Humanistic High Technology Program for At-Risk Students." **(Days Inn, Chatham/ Habersham Room).** This presentation will provide a detailed overview of the development and implementation of the IMPACT Program for at-risk students at Northeast High School in Broward County, Florida.
5.8	Albert H. Gardner	"A Model Workshop for Teachers of Disadvantaged Vocational Students in Inner-City Schools." **(Hyatt, Vernon Room).** An overview of a cross-discipline workshop that incorporated goal-setting, periodic evaluation, outside resources.
5.9	Edward D. Jonas	"We Have Met the Enemy, and He Is Us." **(Days Inn, Kennedy Room, Suite Bldg.).** Strategies that are being used in Atlanta schools for dealing with youth dropping out.
5.10	John Shippee	"Creating Win-Win Situations in Parent, Community and Teacher Involvement with At-Risk Young People: A New Use for Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #2, Oglethorpe Room).** The Cities in Schools (CIS) program increased community, parents, and teachers involvement with at-risk students.
5.11	Sandra G. Pritz	"One Proven Dropout Prevention Model Adapted to Three Different Delivery Systems." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #3, Oglethorpe Room).** Three joint ventures between the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University and the Center on Education & Training for Employment at Ohio State University are discussed.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
5.12	Ginny Eager Brenda Connor	"Forward in the Fifth." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #1, Oglethorpe Room).** A private non-profit organization in Kentucky works to increase the number of high school graduates.

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4:10 - 5:00 pm Continuation of Group Session IV General Topic: *"Reforming and Changing Delivery Systems"*

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
6.1	Jack E. Blackburn Gene White Richard Goodwyn	"Language and the At-Risk Learner: A Bridge Over Troubled Water." **(Hyatt, Vernon Room).** Based on a formal study of dropouts, the presenters will offer two workable models for programs in English and foreign languages.
6.2	Joy Okoniewski Allen	"Defusing the Angry Student – Specific Suggestions to Use with Difficult Students." **(Hyatt, Verelst Room).** This presentation will cover the approaches we use in dealing with students as teachers and administrators and offer alternative delivery systems which work in schools today.
6.3	Francie Smith	"Family Violence: Educational Implications & Recommendations." **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** Information has been gathered concerning children that are homeless as a result of domestic violence.
6.4	Mary Ann Getse	"The Three-Way At-Risk Debate: Alternative School vs. School-Within-A-School vs. Mainstreaming." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #3, Oglethorpe Room).** Wankesha, Wisconsin's urban school system's multiple approaches (3 programs) to a diversity of student problems.
6.5	Janine Van Vark	"Shooting for P.A.R." **(Days Inn, Executive Board Room, Suite Bldg.).** A Prevention and Reaction Program (P.A.R.) used to improve communication between home and school in Pella, Iowa.
6.7	Marvin Hughes	"Comprehensive At-Risk Education (CARE): Making A Difference in Children's Lives." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #4, Oglethorpe Room).** CARE Program produces results through the use of intensive computer remediation in reading and math.
6.10	Marie Hill Frank Hill	"Building Success: Programs for At-Risk Students." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #2, Oglethorpe Room).** Many kinds of programs must be in place, K-12, to reach the many kinds of at-risk students.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
6.11	John Pfuhl	"A Computer-Based Pedagogical Model for the Teaching of Academically At Risk Students." **(Days Inn, Chatham/Habersham Room).** A model of teaching At-Risk students which assumes cognitive and behavioral characteristics of these students.
6.12	Sharon Roesch Joan Gavin	"Attitude, Behavior and Change: A Dropout Prevention Program." **(Days Inn, Roundtable #1, Oglethorpe Room).** A "how to guide" for an award-winning program matching at-risk students with adult role models.
6.13	Dolores Norman Stanley Waldon	"Detroit Public Schools Preparing At-Risk Youth for Employment." **(Days Inn, Kennedy Room, Suite Bldg.).** A vocational/technical program STARS (Support Team for At-Risk Students) designed for dropout prevention.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1991

9:00 - 9:45 am		Third General Session Speaker: Dr. Elizabeth Murphy, Texas Tech University. Presentation Title: "There's A Hole in The Bucket Dear Liza, Dear Lisa. So Fix it Dear Henry, Dear Henry Fix It!" **(Grand Ballroom, Hyatt Regency).**

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10:00 - 10:55 am		Group Session V General Topic: *"Strategies and Programs for Involving At-Risk Youth"*
7.1	Marcia Klenbort	"Learning to Change: Schools of Excellence for At-Risk Students." **(Hyatt, Verelst Room).** A high-powered motivational 29-minute video with discussion on 7 schools that won the U.S.D.C.E. "Schools of Excellence Award" with poverty-level families.
7.2	Rosemarie Dapena Rosana Gatti Vilma T. Nadal	"The ESOL/Bilingual Counselor in Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Maryland: A "Multidimensional Role." **(Hyatt, Westbrook Room).** The recent immigrant: A multicultural approach to counseling.
7.3	Denise C. Collier Cynthia Curtis Betty Lark Alice Hurley Felicia Corbett Chiquota McCloud	"Project GOAL Keenan High School, Columbia, SC: Guided Opportunities for Achievement in Life." **(Hyatt, Sloane Room).** Details on goals, activities, and accomplishments of an established dropout prevention program.

Session#	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
7.5	Richard A. Neumann	"School Culture and Students' Relationships to School: Lessons from the Public Alternative School Experience." **(Hyatt, Savannah Room, 1st Floor).** Social bonding, strain, and labeling theories as a framework for understanding students' relationships to school.
7.6	Jane E. Pollock Joe LoVerde	"100% In Caps and Gowns." **(Hyatt, Vernon Room).** A significant reduced dropout rate for Aurora, Colorado Public Schools over a 3-year period with more community and business involvement.
7.7	Diana E. Pope	"Pitfalls and Successes in Setting Up An Elementary School-Age Mentoring Program." **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** Practical information for implementing a mentoring program in your school with volunteers from the community.
7.8	Gene Bottoms Sandra G. Pritz Alice Presson	"The Vocational-Academic Approach for Dropout Prevention." **(Hyatt, Ballroom E).** A collaborative 2 1/2 year effort where effectiveness of strategies is major emphasis with eight basic strategies.
7.9	Martha Ratliff	"The St. Petersburg, Florida, Challenge: A School for At-Risk Students." **(Hyatt, Ballroom B).** The St. Petersburg "Challenge School" is a unique program which provides comprehensive intervention to at-risk fourth- and fifth-graders.
7.10	Mark Schelske Janis Johnson	"Group Individual Counseling Techniques for Adolescents and College Students with Learning Disabilities." **(Hyatt, Ballroom A).** Discussion will focus on the critical psychosocial issues faced by adolescents and college students with L.D.
7.12	Josephine K. Newton Carol Calfee Sam Mathews Donna Omer Patrick Reedy Patrick Malone	"Florida's Interagency Student Service Programs: A Community Partnership." **(Days Inn, Oglethorpe Room).** Three interagency student services programs that serve grades six through eight in Florida.
7.13	Gary Phillips Leslie White JoAnne Dirring Kris Floyd Bill Helvig	"Learning Opportunities Program at Fayette County High School: A School-Within-A-School Program." **(Days Inn, Executive Board Room, Suite Bldg.).** Using a Learning Opportunities Approach, this program works with 9th-graders in subject areas.

Session#	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
7.14	Lawrence J. Sorohan Joanne Edmondson	"The Student Literacy Corps: A Program for Involving At-Risk Youth." **(Hyatt, Percival Room).** At-risk students are tutored by college students enrolled in the National Study Literacy Corps.

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	11:10 - 12:05 am	Group Session V Continued General Topic: *"Strategies and Programs for Involving At-Risk Youth"*
8.1	Robert Conley Josephine I. Cisnaos Joyce Morgan Baker	"Interdisciplinary Approach to Achieving Academic Excellence for At-Risk Students." **(Hyatt, West brook Room).** A discussion of the use of advanced interdisciplinary classroom to reach at-risk students – a success story.
8.2	Nancy E. O'Dell Patricia Cook	"B.U.I.L.D. (Baccalaureare for University of Indianapolis Learning Disabled): A Complete Support System for the College Learning Disabled Student." **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** This presentation looks at indentification characteristics (behavior patterns), as well as intervention tactics.
8.3	Eleanor Dougherty	"The Touchstones Project: Discussion Classes for Students of All Abilities." **(Hyatt, Verelst Room).** Teachers will be introduced to the project through a presentation and participation in a sample discussion emphasizing the discussion process and materials that help at-risk students.
8.5	John Tudor	"South Carolina's Efforts to Reduce the Dropout Rate." **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** An overview of state programs designed to reduce and retain dropouts – "Target 2000" will be discussed.
8.7	Kathryn Floyd Irv Zisselman Marsha Boney Ellen Justice Virginia Wyson	"Opening Flexible Doors for High School Completion: The Success of Open Campus High Schools in Five Georgia School Systems." **(Hyatt, Ballroom F).** Directors and counselors of 5 open campus schools discuss how they provide an immediately effective dropout recovery delivery system.
8.8	Joan Lietzan Moen	"The Student Assistance Programs: Getting It All Together for Kids and Families." **(Days Inn, Oglethorpe Room).** This award-winning program focuses on early identification and referral of students having school performance problems. Discussion looks at alcohol and other drug issues.

Session#	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
8.9	Lee A. Montgomery	"A Reason to Stay: Strategies for Involving At-Risk Students in School Activity Programs." **(Hyatt, Vernon Room).** The removal of barriers to participation in school activities programs can result in substantial benefits for students at risk.
8.10	Bernadine S. Chapman Carmen N. Colon	"An Academic Smorgasboard: RAPS Recruitment Admission Persistence Strategies." **(Hyatt, Ballroom A).** At-risk courses are identified for general education and restricted academic majors, the support system presented addresses the academic and survival needs of entering and upper-level students.
8.11	Cheryl Deaton Jamie Blair	"School Initiatives That Make a Difference" **(Hyatt, Sloane Room).** In order for at-risk students to avoid burnout, mediocrity, or failure, schools must provide a variety of non-traditional activities which are both exciting and enticing.
8.12	Margaret McLaughlin Patricia Price	"Can Barthomae and Petrosky Pass Standardized Exams?“ **(Hyatt, Savannah Room, 1st Floor).** Describes a basic reading/writing course and assesses the effect on student performance on standardized reading and English tests.
8.13	Leo Boissy Ronald Di Lorenzo	"Wheeling Park High School's Comprehensive Graduation Enhancement Program." **(Hyatt, Ballroom E).** A description of the historical development of 12 years of planning, implementation, and improvements of a wide-range program designed to meet the needs of rural/suburban students.

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1:00 - 1:55 pm		Group Session V (con't.) General Topic: "*Strategies and Program for Involving At-Risk Youth*" Also Group Session VI, General Topic: "*Changing the System.*"
9.1	Judith K. Ingle	"Howard School: An Alternative Opportunity for Success." **(Hyatt, Vernon Room).** Howard School provides an opportunity for students to achieve academic success and to increase their self-esteem, self-confidence, self-control, and self-understanding.
9.2	Gregg Weinlein	"Youth At-Risk and School Discipline: Working With and Not Against Your Students in Need." **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** A look at various school programs that hold students accountable for discipline problems and service potentially at-risk youth.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
9.3	Ted L. Hammock LeQuita Booth McLowery Elrod	"The National Science Center Foundation Learning Logic (L^2) Computer-Based Instructional System." **(Days Inn, Kennedy Room, Suite Bldg.).** A session to revitalize classroom teaching of mathematics, science and implement a computer-based instruction.
9.4	H. Parker Blount	"The Educationally Battered Child." **(Hyatt, Ballroom B).** This presentation examines the ways teachers contribute in creating the educationally battered child.
9.5	Matthew Lane Dennis Jacobson	"Multi-Level Interventions Within an Alternative School." **(Hyatt, Sloane Room).** A multi-leveled intervention plan is discussed that looks at standardized areas of intervention, prevention activities and development of cooperative skills.
9.6	Rosalyn J. McDonald	"Potential Graduate Society: A Mentorship Program with the Chamber of Commerce" **(Days Inn, Executive Board Room, Suite Bldg.).** Fifty students involved in a mentoring program which leads to better self-concept and direction on the part of the students.
9.7	Cheryl Murzyn Stephen O. Jambor	"Outcome Analysis: Comprehensive Programming for Enhancing Student Self-Concept and Reducing At-Risk Behavior." **(Hyatt, Ballroom E).** A first year pre-post analysis for validating the efficacy of intervention used in a technical alternative high school. This is a federal demonstration dropout prevention program.
9.8	Roger Young Elizabeth Perna Rebecca Hauser	"Program Pass (The Parallel Advocate Support System)." **(Hyatt, Ballroom F).** A unique dropout prevention program with corresponding research. Results are preventing dropouts at this Colorado junior high school.
9.9	Jane F. Zenger	"Using the Arts to Motivate the At-Risk Student." **(Days Inn, Oglethorpe Room).** To demonstrate the variety of ways a classroom teacher can include art in higher-level thinking skills of remedial and/or at-risk students.
9.10	Larry D. White	"Ullin, Illinois' TAP Program: A rural approach focusing on student's academic deficiencies." **(Hyatt, Percival Room).** Numerous program resources are highlighted.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
9.11	Nancy Barron	“Development and Current Status of the Rochester General Hospital's Health Careers Program.” **(Hyatt, Ballroom A).** Developmental and uses of awareness programs and motivational tools to enhance the knowledge of health care careers and educational opportunities for at-risk students.
9.12	Wayne A. Bergeron	“Project STAY: A Creative School-Based Model for Dealing with At-Risk Student.” **(Hyatt, Westbrook Room).** A model program with community service. “Outward Bound“ activities, and a comprehensive science program.
9.13	Pier C. Rogers	“The Tension Between Implementing and Evaluating Effective Programs for At-Risk Students.” **(Hyatt, Savannah Room, 1st Floor).** How practitioners deal with evaluation results and “knowing“ what really works!
9.14	Kathryn Sinclair	“What This Kid Needs is to be Thrown Into the Ocean.” **(Hyatt, Verelst Room).** The marine institutes, using a marine-oriented approach to experiential education, provide at-risk students with exciting experiences that increase confidence and self-esteem.

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	2:10 - 3:00 pm	Group Session VI (con't.) General Topic: *“Changing The System.“*
10.1	John Cox Carol Calfee Joe Bell Paula Egelson	“NFIE's Dropout Prevention Initiative.” **(Hyatt, Percival Room).** The National Foundaton for the Improvement of Education's Blueprint for Success. Based on the 47 programs funded by the foundation.
10.2	Ernest G. Rigney Robert Tournier	“At-Risk Students and the Dilemma of Grade Bifurcation.” **(Hyatt, Ballroom B).** A thoroughly investigative look at the effectiveness of incorporating selected components of a “learning skills“ course into a regular college class in order to assist at-risk students.
10.3	Anita Tully Beth A. Curry	“Challenging At-Risk Adolescents in a University Setting.” **(Hyatt, Ballroom D).** This presentation describes the distinctive characteristics of a program now showing a 90 percent retention success rate.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
10.4	J. Thomas Davis G. James Burns	"The Provisional Year: A Sp.ecial Freshman Admissions Program at USC" **(Hyatt, Ballroom E).** This program serves a special portion of the area students who have academic promise, but who might otherwise be denied admission into the University.
10.6	Faith T. McCusker	"Designing and Implementing a Voluntary Group Program for At-Risk Youth." **(Hyatt, Verelst Room).** "Outlets," Oakwood High School's (Cobb County, Georgia) voluntary group program offers support/information/TLC through weekly sessions which run throughout the school year.
10.7	Charles M. Hill Danny C. Carpenter	"The Alternative School as a Significant Force in School Retention: A Local Perspective." **(Hyatt, Ballroom A).** A highly structured, student-centered multi-agency approach to alternative education which has had dramatic results for reducing dropouts.
10.8	Douglas L. Gatchell	"Heirs to Our Future: A Community Oriented Youth Leadership Program." **(Hyatt, Vernon Room).** A description and discussion about a youth leadership program designed to enhance involvement in community decision-making.
10.9	Carla Crutsinger	"Diamonds for Teens: A Leadership Training Program." **(Hyatt, Sloane Room).** A workshop with hands-on training techniques which promote self-awareness, verbal and nonverbal social interaction skills, critical listening, and self-discovery.
10.10	Ruth Carol Chapman	"Cultural Specifics and the At-Risk Youngster: How Differences Affect Achievement." **(Hyatt, Savannah Room, 1st Floor).** A look at youngsters of culturally diverse backgrounds who have been labeled at-risk, an examination of factors affecting them, and prevention strategies.
10.11	Rudine Phelps Sarah P. Thornton	"An After-School Tutorial Program (ASTP)." **(Days Inn, Oglethorpe Room).** Elbert County Georgia's Middle School's third-year program that targets at-risk students.
10.13	Sam Ensley Karen McGuire Becky Moose Patti Everett	"Parents: A Necessary Link." **(Hyatt, Westbrook Room).** A successful team shares its methods of involving parents to insure student success.

Session #	Presenter(s)	Presentation Title/Meeting Room/Description
10.14	Josephine Norward	"Improving School-Based Resources for Severely Emotionally Handicapped Students At Risk." **(Days Inn, Executive Board Room, Suite Bldg.).** Discussion of academic performances and success factors for severely emotionally handicapped students.

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Individual Chairpersons for Group Presentations include:

James Parker
Fred Page
Chris Chalker
Marie Ann Polite

The Second Southeastern Conference on Youth At Risk

Conference Coordinating Committee

Evelyn Dandy
Gwendolyn Goodman
Otis Johnson
Judith Krug
Robert C. Morris, Chair
Nelda Schultz
Zelda B. Tenenbaum
Daniel Washington

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Savannah State College
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
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Appendix B

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